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# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Charles Philip Neffleton

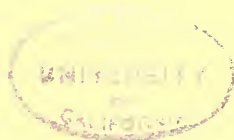
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# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

CHARLES PHILIP NETTLETON

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND POEM

BY

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BY

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SAN FRANCISCO

A. M. Robertson

1904

GENERAL

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*1904*

# *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

CHARLES PHILIP NETTLETON.

So the child was named when he appeared in his first home at New Haven, Conn., as the only son of George W. and Charlotte L. Nettleton. Lack of physical strength made him the object of continual solicitude and prevented the long school course, as well as a vigorous participation in the usual youthful sports and adventures, so his childhood was even less eventful than that of the ordinary New England boy.

Instead of an actor he was a reader and a dreamer, sensitively shrinking into silence at a touch of ridicule or harsh criticism, longing desperately, at times, for a place among the world's recognized workers yet without the boldness, the endurance, the push and trample needed to win and keep what he prayed for and seemingly deserved. His hardest battles, like those of Bunyan's Pilgrim, were mental and spiritual, fought in silence and solitude, and their results offered to the world with diffidence because of his reverence for the works and uttered thoughts of that world's greater minds.

No one knows when he began to write. The first published effort which has been traced was not original, but shows the effect of much reading. It consists of one-line extracts from many authors, arranged in verse, and was found in a New York paper.

Soon after, while he was still but a boy, the family was suddenly uprooted and removed from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific, to a new and more arduous, but still unsatisfying, life. In the intervals of out-door work, or at night, he studied by himself, grew familiar with deep thinkers, even learning the language of the Greeks, and wrote poems and short stories, essays or parables, for the "Chautauquan," "Independent," "Modern Culture," "Springfield Republican,"

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"Overland Monthly," "Philistine" and other periodicals, as he could, gradually giving up one hope and accepting another, turning from literature toward the ministry, while waiting for his opportunity.

After nearly twenty years it came, and he entered the San Mateo School of Divinity, entered with the eager plunge of one who, though coming late, is determined to deserve the full recompense as only justice, because of the deferred call, his very soul crying out, "Oh, the little time there is!" Two short years of this and then the shadow overtook him and drew him away before the Lord of the Harvest had counted the sheaves and given him his portion of reward.

We who might have helped him more but did not, may read again his pure, unselfish words and offer them as stimulus and comfort to others who may be called before the sunset, before the reckoning time. Surely his work has not been wasted, surely it is to be continued.

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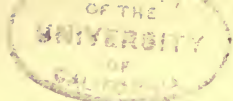


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## OF OUR FRIEND.

Gone! And then Memory came  
And swiftly, with sad surprise,  
Gathered his voice and his name,  
His step and the flash of his eyes,—  
Saying, "All these were of him,  
But not for unanswering earth;  
Now, while your eyes are yet dim,  
Speak each unto each of his worth.

"Question his words yet again,—  
For they are not friends who forget—  
Question the strokes of his pen;  
Not one will you find to regret.  
Young, was he not, to be done  
With all that it means but to live;  
Young, all the good to have won  
This hurrying world had to give?

"Life is 'a feast or a fast?'  
His life was a longing, a light  
Shaded for fear of the blast,  
Yet shining afar in the night.  
Life is 'a song or a moan?'  
His life was an anthem, a trill;  
He was a wind-harp, alone,  
Breathed on by the Infinite Will.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

"So, in the days that are long,  
Though tempted to listen and weep,  
Join in the reverent song,  
Not dead, nor yet hushed into sleep."

\* \* \* \* \*

Tenderly Memory turned  
And locked in our innermost heart  
That which each one of us earned  
While thus he was walking apart.

—ISABEL DARLING.

# *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

## AN APPRECIATION.

The author of the work which this book contains was remarkable both for the character of his life and for the quality of his thought. His mind lies open, to a certain extent, in the pages that follow, but the nobility of his soul and the remarkable fidelity with which he met the varied duties which called forth his activity, can be known only to those who were familiar with the man himself in his home and in his intercourse with his associates. An intimate and close acquaintance of more than fifteen years enables the writer of these lines to appreciate the nature of the difficulties, the struggles, the discouragements, the aspirations, the attainments, the successes, which made up the human existence of his friend, Charles P. Nettleton, and of none, as it seems to him, could words of truer praise be spoken than of the son, the brother, the man who offered up all that he had and was upon the altar of duty, of filial affection and friendship.

The chief desire of Mr. Nettleton, for many years, had been to devote himself to the service of God in the sacred ministry. At last the way seemed opened, but the call was to a higher service, and to those who knew him best, as they think of his departure, there comes a remembrance of the words of the Master, which seem so appropriate for such a one: "Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will sit thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

—Rev. Hamilton Lee.

Berkeley, Cal., October, 1903.

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Hold open the door of thy heart;  
Reach out as I reach unto you;  
Hand in hand let us ponder apart,  
In the glory of quest for the true.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE ONE WHO KNOWS.

The day is dead, and now, before  
Life's tender nurse, the night, bestows  
On me her transient death, once more  
I seek the One who all things knows.

My Father, pardon weakness, sin!  
Out of the pathway still I go,  
And when at night I look within  
My shame, my comfort is, You know.

You know my every need and dream,  
You know each doubt, delight and woe;  
The passion strong and vague extreme  
Of body, mind and soul, You know.

The careless word that hurt a friend,  
The deed of shame that pleased a foe,  
The secret thoughts none apprehend—  
In sorrowing joy I feel You know.

I cannot hate the thing abhorred  
By You enough to leave it; no,  
Nor even pray aright; but, Lord,  
The heart You made, that heart You know.

The spotless love and prudent brain  
And mighty hand, that reach down low  
And gather golden human grain,  
I lack; the bitterness You know.

The waves of pain and grief swell high;  
Doubt's piercing winds forever blow  
And challenge hope itself, but I  
Will conquer with the thought, You know.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Pure peace, deep joy, the swelling heart  
Is powerless to prove, the glow  
In friendship's eyes—how dumb the art  
Of gratitude for these! You know.

The miracle of human breath  
I gratefully receive, and oh!  
The mystery of human death  
I joy in knowing that You know.

Of all the loving souls who smile  
And weep and bear with us below,  
Who knows us perfectly the while?  
O, happy are we that You know.

My faith in such a God increase,  
And prayer be wise and patience grow!  
I close my eyes in love and peace,  
Because You know, because You know.

### RECALL THE GOOD ALONE.

Behold, there is a brighter side to all  
The memories of life! Put grief away,  
Declare a truce with troubles great and small,  
And wisely join me while I bravely say,  
"Recall the good and let the evil die."

Thy gold is now a thing of nought? But still  
Thy soul and God are left! And is it nought  
That once the Lord of Life your hands did fill  
With many pleasant things, in deed and thought?  
Recall the good and let the evil die.



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

The friend you thought so true is false? But still  
He once was true! The dear old days were light  
With friendship pure, and on her holy hill,  
Hand clasped in hand, you clearer saw the right.  
Recall the good and let the evil die.

The one loved best has gone before? But still  
Be glad for her sake, now at rest and glad.  
Exalt thy happy days, and let them thrill  
The heart allowed to think of joy once had.  
Recall the good and let the evil die.

Behold, there is a brighter side to all  
The memories of life! Sit calmly down  
In the sun of memories sweet, where still may fall  
Upon thy soul the touch of some dear crown.  
Recall the good and let the evil die.

### "NAY, ASK ME NOT."

Nay, ask me not, sweet love, the reasons why.  
I love thee!  
Can words avail these words to amplify,  
"I love thee?"

Why, if each star above could speak today,  
(I love thee!)  
And reasons were revealed with every ray,  
(I love thee!)

Love still would be a miracle, indeed,  
(I love thee!)  
Unfolded now—or never—in the creed  
"I love thee."

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

O look within, where love is lord and king,  
    (I love thee!)  
And ask no more for causes while I sing  
    "I love thee!"

Let heartless sages analyze that vow  
    "I love thee!"  
In wiser ways I'll tell thee why and how  
    I love thee.

### WHEN GREECE IS NAMED.

How richly young and full of joyous dreams  
    Our latter day of heavy life appears  
    When Greece is named! Snapped is the strand of years,  
And quick the pulse of spirit bounds and seems  
At one with natural life beside fair streams,  
    With gay Theocritus, with Sappho's tears,  
    With Homer, Plato, Poesy's high peers,  
Who lived for beauty and her sister themes.

As on a road I know, a sudden breeze  
    Of warmer air than common, at one place  
    Sweeps down the hill with sweeter, balmier breath,  
So comes the thought of Greece; lo, jubilees  
    Of wildwood beauty, statured strength and grace,  
    Spontaneous songs, which yet rule us and death!

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## THE SEARCH.

Lo! even as one may dream of space,  
And turn at night his face  
Unto the heavens and speed his strongest thought  
Beyond, beyond, past stars, and evermore beyond  
Past stars and systems, till  
He feels a solemn chill  
Strike down his finite power and will,  
And make the soul despond  
In that vast boundless, awful space that God has wrought,  
While close beside him, to and fro  
God's waves of space around him flow,  
So man looks up to Him.  
He dwells beside us, ay, and in us evermore,  
But we forget Him often, choosing to explore  
All space until we touch the rim  
And find, perchance, His Face.  
And yet,  
I look around, and know that He is near;  
I stretch my hand and lo! a swift embrace;  
I question—hark! within me, loud and clear,  
A voice that never dies;  
A voice that testifies  
My soul is part of Him, although it wander far.  
Shall I regret  
The finite mind, the failure dead  
His boundlessness to bound,  
When perfectly my little cup is filled with Him,  
And daily I am led  
By the same law of love that rules each distant star?

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Shall I explore the vast profound  
Where countless stars and systems sing His praise,  
When clearest sight is still too dim  
To reach the outer rim  
Of my own infinite soul, so strong and yet so weak?  
Though failure pass success one still must seek  
The wisdom of all ways  
That urge the soul to flight and press it back with light.  
Lost is our sight  
Within His endless space,  
And, lost in loving, infinite light,  
The soul that seeketh God finds Him in every place,  
Yet may not find His Face.

### THE VISION BEAUTIFUL.

In faltering words of prayer a grace I sought;  
I longed the vision beautiful to see;  
O that my Savior's glance might rest on me  
And in my heart the change of love be wrought!

The answer to my prayer was swiftly brought;  
I saw—ah, passing bright!—the way that He  
Had marked among the shards and thorns that we  
Might follow there, by His example taught.

O path illumined by my Savior's feet!  
I'll follow where it leads, and love shall give  
The full significance to duty; meet  
Shall be the humblest task; my joy to live  
And walk the path His weary feet have trod,—  
Content to find therein approach to God.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE LONG VACATION.

No sweet vacation-day may be  
Just now for me,  
Although I slow and wearily  
Go to and fro.

Would I could rest! Long years ago  
It seemed that so,  
Alone, could I still courage show  
For duties nigh.

But wait! Since Time my soul would try  
So utterly,  
I'll mock him, scorn him and defy;  
For comes a morn

When of his strength Time shall be shorn,  
When will be born  
Vacation-day without a thorn!  
Then rest may I.

## AT NIGHT.

A truce to time and all humanity!  
No longer slave to life the passionate,  
One's soul may pause a space and celebrate,  
In silence, freedom from the litany  
Of day's tumultuous froth, half blasphemy  
And wholly crude, and feel night re-create  
The weary world and wearier soul. Love, fate,  
Life, death,—at night we almost hold the key.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

With tranquil eyes the starry sentinels  
Of heaven look down, and whisper of that day  
Whose perfect round forever dawns anew.  
With tranquil eyes, where faith the loyal dwells,  
We answering look up and calmly say,  
"All's well, all's well, my heart,—so, heart, be true."

### THE TWO MYSTERIES.

We know not what it is, dear, this sleep so deep and still—  
The folded hands, the awful calm, the cheek so pale and chill;  
The lids that will not lift again, tho' we may call and call,  
The strange white solitude of peace that settles over all.

We know not what it means, dear, this desolate heart-pain,  
This dread to take our daily way to walk in it again;  
We know not to what other sphere the loved who leave us go,  
Nor why we're left to wonder still, nor why we do not know.

But this we know: our loved and dead, if they should come  
this day,  
Should come and ask us, "What is life?" not one of us could  
say.

Life is a mystery as deep as ever death could be.  
Yet, oh, how sweet it is to us, this life we love to see!

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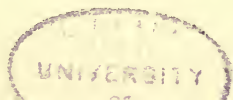
## GLIMPSES.

Set before thy high-born soul  
Nothing smaller than the Whole.  
Earth is great but thou art greater.  
Wouldst thou be her all-translator?

Pass behind her veiled face:  
Hidden deeply lies the grace  
Thou art kin to, waiting thee,—  
Grace of love and purity.  
Parts are parts, but thou art one;  
Satisfy thyself with none,  
When thy high soul, infinite,  
Throbbing, bounding, will admit  
Songs of beauty from all spheres,  
All eternity's full years,  
And the Master!

Good is one,  
Soul of beauty and bright sun  
For thy doubt and agony;  
Come thou home, mortality!  
Child, who vivid visions sees  
Of pain's possibilities,  
Visions mirrored from the past,  
Striking pale the face aghast,  
Thinkest thou that not for thee  
God ordained a jubilee?  
Brother, love! Great love within  
Killeth pain and covereth sin.

All things call thee to rejoice;  
Hast thou heard their still, sweet voice?  
Be their meaning well inferred,  
For these voices are as seeds;  
Follow, if thou once hast heard!  
Deeper, deeper than all creeds,



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Broader far than sages thought,  
Higher, holier than have sung  
Poets, by their rapture taught,  
Is the soul, that still is young  
After speech has set a bound,—  
Young, but old from wandering.

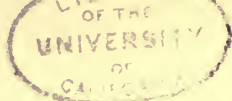
Nature's mountain-tops await,  
Half explored, her equal mate;  
Glories infinite surround  
Each and all; they cannot bring  
Light to those who love the part  
More than God's great circled Heart.  
Nature, Beauty, Good, enthrone  
High the soul that knows its own.

### WHAT AM I, LOVE?

What am I, love, that thou shouldst turn to me?  
Thou, gifted rarely with the power to thrill  
The hearts of men with song; thou, with high skill  
The imprisoned soul in instruments to free;  
Thou, eloquent in tongues and with the key  
Of wisdom in the painter's art at will,—  
With other gifts and knowledges that fill  
Thy life? Can love descend to me from thee?

One gift, one little gift is mine, to bring  
And offer in exchange for what thou art,—  
Some trifling power, some little song to sing.  
I equal thee in one thing only,—heart,—  
And love thee for thyself alone; if thou  
Wilt so love me, repeat, renew thy vow.





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## QUATRAINS ON AUTHORS.

Emerson.

He heard the morning stars together sing  
God's song of light and joy supernal,  
Translated part in language faltering,  
Then joined them in their chant eternal.

Socrates.

"Corrupter of the youth." O fools and blind!  
He was your one great Polar Star to Truth,  
A bright immortal light of soul and mind.  
That hemlock killed not him, but your own youth.

Plato.

Ask not if Socrates or Plato speak,  
When such white light would glorify a score.  
Each shines a star on Wisdom's highest peak—  
Or as twin stars! Could one reflect such lore?

Saadi.

Blend wit and grace, and with a silver tongue  
Laud holiness and wisdom—yea, with speech  
Like wedding-bells ring to a bridegroom young,—  
Then hang thy head and thee let Saadi teach.

Rousseau.

He dared to lay himself full length upon  
The grim dissecting-table and with keen  
Unwavering scalpel bare the flesh and bone.  
Do human nature's charms redeem the scene?

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Sidney Lanier.

Nay, Pan is dead and him it cannot be!  
Yet from the marshes—O, what jubilee,  
Attenuated with the years, rings out from one  
Whom music-lovers name Song's worthy son!

Leigh Hunt.

I hear a pleasant rumor, loving friend,  
That various high paths may claim thee; good!  
And fame go with thee! for, if just, they blend  
With that God-given gem on brotherhood.

La Bruyere.

A princely courtier in this palace where  
King Truth, Queen Beauty, both are bought and sold.  
Hearts loyal please him; knaves had best prepare  
To be most neatly pinked with rapier bold.

La Rochefoucauld.

A one-eyed diver in the heart's deep sea,  
Who set in gold the worthless bones he found.  
The setting gives them worth — or can it be  
Self-love reads on — because our friends they wound!

Pope.

Truth's homeliest home of body is here, with rhyme  
And rhythm as hands to fend the touch of time,  
And brilliant sparkling eyes to charm our wit,  
But — but — the heart was left outside of it!

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

William Morris.

A blithe romancer, happiest in the past!  
Brave healthy knight of beauty, chief of needs!  
Up, friends, and joy in the magic ever cast  
On wholesome life by wholesome natural deeds.

Edwin Arnold.

One, ever one and beautiful is Light,  
Though bearing many names. Love thou each ray,  
And warm thy sluggish soul with some new rite.  
Light calls to prayer and actions pure: Obey.

Firdusi.

Chivalrous, smooth, pathetic, sweet, sublime!  
The balanced bearing in the mosque of time  
Of one who was to song a true high-priest,  
Proves well his title, "Homer of the East."

Omar Khayyam.

Dwell here three sad sweet Spirits: Perfumes born  
Of fading Rose-leaves, visions of The Thorn  
Behind each Flower of Joy in Life's Bouquet,  
And one long Sigh we make too oft to scorn.

St. Augustine.

He walked with God, to our behoof and good.  
The reedy staff of reason, lo! it grows  
In his hand till the soul is strongly wooed,—  
When love and faith still higher ways disclose.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Dante.

Deep bites life's acid on the heart and lo!  
His world and ours is graved thereon. Would he  
Have all forsworn that solemn Comedy,  
The price being love, peace, tranquil death? Ah, no!

Alfred Austin.

We loved you once, dear Shakespere, Wordsworth, all  
Who really heard The Sisters' mystic call,—  
But now we bow to genius! Ere you frown,  
Pray take your opera glasses and look — up.

Wordsworth.

With deep love-opened eyes he paced the bound  
Of God's fair garden — flower, field and sky;  
Yet joyed the most to feel his God surround  
Mankind, the fruit, with immortality.

Montaigne.

Wide learning, interest calm in all man's deeds,  
Deep insight into king's and peasant's heart,—  
All these have others also; he succeeds  
Because himself is limned with artful art.

Bobby Burns.

The douce and unco' guid — Old Clootie tak' 'em,  
While couthie Bobby lilt a healsome sang!  
"The dearthfu' Lord be thankit that he spak' 'em,"  
Says ilka heart that isna wholly wrang.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Theocritus.

Come bathe in Grecian sunshine warm and sweet.  
Here shepherds pipe their lays to maidens true,  
And false; fast beats the pulse; the Graces meet;—  
Come breathe the summer's sweet bouquet anew.

Marcus Aurelius.

A heathen? God have mercy on the saints!—  
Adulterous David, Solomon, who broke  
God's sternest laws, weak Peter, with three taints,  
Abram, liar!—Marcus, loan these men thy cloak.

Epictetus.

A stoic? Ay and more,—a child of heaven,  
(Or may I never reach it!) who, as sure  
Of God and right as self, in holy steven  
Outpoured his life to make men strong and pure.

Joaquin Miller.

A salty breeze of springtime, fresh and strong,  
The Western World blows through its Golden Gate.  
God's earth is young and fair and nothing wrong,  
Save when man turns to worship gold, and hate.

Walt Whitman.

Enter, who love broad sympathy, the fresh  
Sweet air of woods, the heart of faith and joy—  
Read Whitman. If we glimpse forbidden flesh,  
Receive the good and pass the slight alloy!

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Thoreau.

Why do the trees confide in him? and why  
The squirrels, ay, the timid fish, that brave  
Freely their lives? He loved them! and love's wave  
Bore wealthy ships, that now at anchor lie.

Browning.

A rugged road he hewed up Wisdom's mountain,  
Where steady brain and feet alone may follow;  
But star-grown fruits and many a crystal fountain  
Reward the wondering souls that leave the hollow.

Mrs. Browning.

The tense cord only yields to music's thrill.  
Pain compassed soul and body for a time,  
Baptizing after-love with light, until  
She rang life's carillon in deathless rhyme.

Milton.

He stands a massive marble monument,  
Pre-eminently sculptured in relief  
With vast adventurous dreams magnificent,  
And stately pictures of man's joy and grief.

Sir Thomas Browne.

O bishop in disguise, come, dispossess  
Our souls of paltry aims and narrowness,  
And teach the writers of the present time  
That "beauty" may with Christian "duty" rhyme.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Hawthorne.

The mosses will not grow upon his tales  
Until life's sweet and minor tones we hate;  
Oblivion will not still the woful wails  
Of one sad wrong while any wrong's innate.

Tennyson.

O kingly brain and knightly hand! We bow  
Anew to virtue when with beauty crowned,  
And love fair beauty most on virtue's brow.  
Full well we love when these, with faith, abound.

Ruskin.

The art of life demands a lifetime's art,  
With art and beauty, work and duty filled;  
While earth's rude mart needs most the unselfish heart  
Skilled in love's art, and by high virtues thrilled.

Carlyle.

Be bold for battle, brothers! Sin and bale  
Abound here hand in hand, and damned be he  
Who blinds his eyes. God watches! Hope, and be  
Bright heroes, clad in God and Good for mail.

Walton.

Ah, ha! the friend, the field, the gentle stroll,  
But most the happy contemplative goal  
Of fishing! Ah, that bait of pleasure fine  
No honest gentleman will e'er decline.

# *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

Swinburne.

The evening, not the morning, stars heard he;  
The music of his morbid jubilee  
Enraptures and rebuffs in equal parts,  
Yet all love him who loves love's joys and smarts.

Villon.

The heart of song is song about the heart;  
The salt of song is sure the shade of death.  
Come, sing, and love the body till we part,  
For where are they who swayed worlds with a breath?

Paul Verlaine.

Love, and bewildering reign of the senses,  
Pain, and the mystical reason for all,  
Music, like charity, veiling offences,—  
And Satan a-grin at his beautiful thrall!

Heine.

A stormy petrel, resting, sleeping never,  
That circles homeless o'er the restless waves  
Of bitter time, yet swift to catch and sever  
From gloomy clouds the one sweet drop that saves.

Jean Ingelow.

The holiest shrine vouchsafed for us to know  
Is some pure woman's heart. Our hearts bend low  
Before the snow-white thought, the star-keen light  
Which is herself, revealed with graceful might.



# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Thomas a'Kempis.

I am but night; Lord Christ, be Thou my Light!  
I am but weakness; guard me or I fall!  
I and the world are hopeless; purge our sight!  
Light, Strength and Hope,—Thou, Christ, art All in All!

Longfellow.

No dashing eloquence, no strange wild strain  
That fires the blood as warriors storm a town;  
He comes as comes the gentle steady rain,  
Refreshing each dry field where it sinks down.

Bryant.

He is a forest-walk on some fair hill,  
Where utter peace may nurse the weary breast;  
Sweet flowers kiss the mold beside a rill,  
And shyly steal the sunbeams in to rest.

Goldsmith.

How great is great simplicity, how dear  
To minds aweary of the tangled maze  
That dreamers, wise but narrow, on us blaze!  
The deep may still be fair and calm and clear.

William Blake.

He was a breeze from the eternal field  
Where perfect souls, young evermore, attend  
The flowers of God's thoughts, and sometimes yield  
A fragrant breath to souls they would befriend.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Lamb.

To genial wit and wisdom drain the wine,  
    (The brave heart gains the lion's honey sweet)  
And murmur "Thank the gods for every line!"  
    (But oh, the ridged way and stinging sleet!)

Christina G. Rosetti.

Most fair is childhood, passing fair the bright  
    Sweet show each passing day yields — and destroys.  
But all — ah, all is vanity and blight  
    Beside the Better Country's perfect joys.

Poe.

Lo, 'tis a gala night, with cypress-breath,  
And these be wooded isles of life and death,  
Where muffled spirits chant a dirge of time,  
Melodious, wild, and morbidly sublime.

Robert L. Stevenson.

With boyish shouts he cries out for the sea,  
    With manhood's force he makes a clear-cut way,  
    With womanly winning grace he lights the day,  
And round his feet we cluster breathlessly.

Moore.

O harp of Erin, isle of wit and woe!  
    O harp and heart of music, love and tears,—  
The winds of life have rarely to and fro  
    Swept o'er a quicker heart through all the years!

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Confucius.

How paltry sound the nations' parting names,  
When one great language falls from each great mind!  
Beside all prophets pure Confucius flames,  
Who laws of love and duty well divined.

Homer.

Lo, god-like men and men-like gods, who bend  
Before the throne of beauty's dazzling queen!  
Yet greater is their great creator, friend  
To all who glory in all passions keen.

Shakspeare.

Astronomers reel back from endless space,  
And muse in awe upon the countless stars;  
So, here, man's infinite life no limit mars,  
And each himself may study face to face.

Goethe.

Where dwelleth knowledge? I will seek it out,  
And flash white lightning through its years-dried rind . . .  
That one may zone with light nature and mind  
'Tis fit that women weep, I have no doubt!

The Author of Job.

Set he the world's high-water mark of true  
And living poetry. Simple, profound,  
Sublime, the inner as the outer bound  
Of man's great soul is greatly held in view.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Byron.

For him God freely poured the wine of song  
And sorrow. Rich, poor, sensitive, unwise,  
He reckless sang his heart and scorned disguise.  
His wealth is ours, his faults to God belong.

Keats.

"In His own image God created man;"  
And there be some, like this immortal youth,  
Who bear the Spirit's stamp and hear, in truth,  
Unheard sweet melodies Saturnian.

Shelley.

A man? A star, a lark near heaven's shut gate,  
Singing with broken wing. I think that when  
His glorious songs and dreams all left his pen,  
That gate he doubted so they opened straight.

Sappho.

Alas! Time's tangled tree-tops caught but few  
Short flashes of thy silver moon of song  
For us, and yet those broken beams strike through  
Our thrilling thoughts until they seem a throng.

De Quincey.

"Of making many books there is no end,"  
Nor lack of loving readers when the fire  
Of utter genius makes them to suspire.  
We honor self in calling thee our friend.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE SEASHORE AT NIGHT.

I hear the pulse of Father Time, I see  
The stormy surge of life akin to mine,  
The spirit of the sea locks arms with me  
And whispers of his peace beneath the brine.  
Above, where softly walks the moon, is peace;  
Below, where sleep the dead, is sweet release;  
Between, a worthless soul that well may cease.

The roar, the roar, the booming ceaseless roar!  
And yet, the silence underneath the frush!  
I reach my arms, I reach my soul. Yet more  
And more, O brother mine, of cry and hush  
Speed in on me from the infinities deep;  
For I, too, seem a sea and I have keep  
Of panting thoughts and hopes that will not sleep.

I too reach up a shore not yet for me;  
I too sob out by night and day my breath,  
And pauselessly my beating heart, unfree  
From time and tears, awaits the calmer, Death.  
Moan on, O brother, moan, yet sing of peace  
Beneath thy throbs; there comes—there comes release,  
When restless surge of sea and life shall cease.

## HER PORTRAIT.

As on some distant star you gaze at night,  
And wondering, low in silence bend your soul  
Before that radiant miracle of light,  
Too rare and far for you to read its scroll,  
So gaze upon this portrait and be dumb—  
To you it speaks as spoke the distant star,  
Careless and cold; to me—to me there come—  
Sweet messages of love from realms afar.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## CALIFORNIA.

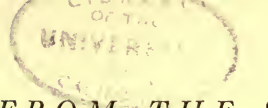
Five thousand years the cry of "Westward!" rose  
Within the ardent restless Aryan race,  
Five thousand stormy years they sought the grace  
Of some Hesperian land of pure repose.  
At last God greatly smiled: here ever glows  
The sun of peace on man's and nature's face.  
The crowning crown is gained — beyond is space —  
And all that man may ask this land bestows.

Rest now, O weary race, forevermore.  
'Tis afternoon, and wanderings are done.  
The Lord of Life still beckons on before  
To his own land of peace beyond the sun,  
But California ends the earthly quest:  
'Tis afternoon; joy, and lie down and rest.

## DAWN IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY.

The stars' song died away; Sierras' snows  
Faint-heralded the day's departing sleep,  
And earth was infinitely still. Deep, deep  
The stillness pressed, until I felt it close  
Night's sombre page and the soul's more sombre woes.  
Now clearer, clearer o'er the snow-crowned steep  
The lambent spirit drew, and swift its sweep  
Without awoke within hope's joyous glows.

So calm, so pure! and still the brightness grew.  
So holy earth, I, too, grew holy then,  
And breathed God's air without, within, anew.  
So dazzling bright! I gazed intent, as when  
A heaven-born soul bows first before The Flame,  
And I, too, bowed to where His angel came.



# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE PLAY IN THE VESTIBULE.

I saw a play within a vestibule,  
Or ere the lights revealed the room beyond.

A motley crowd strode up and down the stage.  
Fair wide-eyed children lisped their parts, old men  
And women wandered through the shifting maze,  
Half-carelessly, and both were elbowed by  
Strong men and maidens, who declaimed so loud  
Their varied lines I listened, smiling. Some,  
Too conscious of rich robes and prominent parts,  
Played ill, for with a selfishness extreme  
And pride that sneered at heaven itself, they stalked  
With arrogance upon the rights of men,  
Who through sweet gentleness or timid hearts  
Gave place to force, content to yield their rights  
That discord fiercer still might not destroy  
The great effect desired. Some marred the play  
By spending all their breath in scorning, yea,  
In cursing others; some were ignorant  
And stumbled in each gesture, word and act,  
And some, far too intent on watching close  
Their fellow-actors, or engrossed in dreams  
Of happy leisure on the morrow, failed  
To heed their time, and would not win, I thought,  
Full payment for their hours.

Here fainted one,  
O'ercome with secret pain; but rarely stooped  
A soul to aid, though feebleness in one  
Made all the others weaker. Selfishness  
And pride ruled every step of many there,  
And, oh, it was most pitiful when base  
And hateful parts won most the loud applause



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Of men and women! Moans and groans arose  
From souls crushed ruthlessly aside and robbed  
Of rightful place upon the stage, until  
It seemed a tragedy as far below  
The lowest hell as hell is far from heaven.  
And still the drama surged.

From these I turned  
And gladly watched the worthy players, those  
Who sought the meaning of the author, then  
Put all their heart and soul and body in  
Love's labor of interpretation. Love,  
Indeed, the key-note seemed of all that strange  
And mystic plot, for watching these wise souls  
Give love for dross, seek love beneath each mask,  
And urge its growth, declaring it the one  
True binding law which quickened all the play  
And crowned the end with peace, I dared believe  
That they had caught the motive of the piece,  
That they alone revealed that play to be  
No dream of passing worth, but full of ends  
Most weighty. These redeemed it!

Various some,  
Clad in the common guise of laborers  
And playing most in pantomime, upheld  
The honor of the stage so gloriously  
I clapped my hands and wished them higher place,  
While here some fragile form drew from me tears,  
So nobly did she bear her through the stress  
And storm of acting. There, again, a man,  
Half clad, shamed scores of weak or coward souls  
To braver ways, and these reached out and passed  
The blessing on to others. Children knew



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Instinctively the spirit of the piece,  
And prompted often men and women who  
Grew faint and near forgot their lines because  
The air was stifled.

Each part, high or low,  
Or pure or base, all interwoven was  
With marvelous scale of parts; yet oftentimes  
I saw an actor flinch and sigh, and then  
Retire beyond my gaze. Pause there was none;  
Recruited from what ranks I could not see,  
The place was filled.

Oh, furious and wild  
Swept on that mystic play, that awful play,  
That tragedy! And yet it seemed a thing  
Whose purpose it would joy the heart to know,  
Since wondrous God-like love in many hearts  
Abounded. — Let me not forget to speak  
Of certain there for whom I trembled, lest  
The drama fail in purpose through them; souls  
Who gave their time and strength that others might  
Achieve their ends, the while their own dear parts  
Seemed all forgot. Shall I win credence when  
I swear that sombre drama glowed with light  
Because of silent souls like these?

I gazed  
With ardent smiles and tears until, perplexed  
With many a doubt, I turned away mine eyes  
To know the reason of this play. One flash —  
The Author — He the Lord of Life — a hope —  
A cry for greater light — then darkness. Then  
I had the reason, all my soul could grasp!  
He is, He, Lord of Life and Love, and guides  
The World, eternity's dark vestibule.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## OPPOSITION.

"Can this be well, that day by day the swell  
And surge of troubles, griefs and doubts return  
To curse the heart which hoped some day to earn  
The joy and peace that with true conquerors dwell?  
I face each hour the thoughts no thoughts can quell,  
The wearying tasks whose good I never learn,  
Nor dare to hope, howe'er the heart may yearn,  
For rest this side the grave: can this be well?"

Poor, weary soul, let nature speak to thee:  
Forespent with many flights through hindering air,  
A lark once prayed that air might cease to be.  
Her folly granted, all too late aware  
How the opposing ether made her rise,  
She fell to earth, no more to reach the skies.

## THE OLD STORY.

|        |           |
|--------|-----------|
| I,     | IX,       |
| He.    | Flee.     |
| II,    | X,        |
| She.   | Decree.   |
| III,   | XI,       |
| Free.  | Jubilee.  |
| IV,    | XII,      |
| See?   | Three.    |
| V,     | XIII,     |
| Tea.   | Disagree. |
| VI,    | XIV,      |
| Knee.  | Decree.   |
| VII,   | XV,       |
| Plea.  | Glee.     |
| VIII,  |           |
| Agree. |           |

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE PILOT.

The Captain's voice was clear and loud.

"What course is this, O Pilot rude,

That thou art taking, when my word

Should guide thee? What! shall joy elude

My grasp because thine eyes are blurred?"

The Pilot guides the ship with dim

Hid face, and words are nought to him.

The Captain raised a heavy hand.

"Beware! my might shall fiercely glow

If thou guide not as I shall say.

I rule my voyage and I know,

Alone, the path by night and day."

The sun sails calmly with sweet grace,—

Still guides the Pilot with hid face.

Despair makes low the Captain's voice.

"Nor joy, nor hope of joy, is mine,

Who sail alone and ever must.

The ship shall sink; I will decline

To serve 'neath one I cannot trust."

The Pilot hears.—A thousand suns

Would shed but darkness to the light

From him that flames. The Captain shuns

That awful gaze and kneels, contrite.

His voice prays weepingly and low,

"My Pilot, shrive me from the past!

I erred, not knowing anything.

Lead on, to love or chilling blast,

Eternal Pilot, Lord and King."

The ship sped on. The Pilot smiled,

For man and he were reconciled.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## TOO LATE.

"It was a crime, that bitter word from me,  
A crime, O Christ, that breaks my heart," she said.  
(Shall love be given tomorrow or today?)

"Forgive me, dear Lord Christ, and grant this plea:  
Restore my breast his loving heart and head."  
(Give love today and always — while you may.)

"I pained him! — I, unworthy now indeed  
Of his dear love or touch upon the brow."  
(Shall nettle-seed be sown and roses bloom?)  
"I pained him! yet such love as his would heed  
My bitter cry if he but heard it now!"  
(Lo! seeds shall bear their kind, for joy or gloom.)

"O sailor-lover, husband, come to me!  
The Christ shall die before I curse again."  
(May many tears bring back a spirit-soul?)  
"He will return! He can but heed my plea!  
He will return — but I grieve on till then."  
(Will tears avail when Death has claimed his toll?)

## TO WILLIAM WATSON.

(Author of "The Purple East.")

The nation lives! We thought her dead indeed,  
Old England, dead, or palsied with old age,  
When month succeeded month and still the gage  
Of righteous war was not thrown down, to weed  
The world of Turkey. But in time of need  
A true man speaks, and through the hermitage  
Of one brave man, who spurns her patronage  
And laughs at hate, rebukes from God proceed.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Stand forth, high William Watson! Thou art crowned  
By thine own words beyond the words of king.  
And we would crowd to laud thee, thee, renowned  
For loyalty to truth! Take heart and sing  
Again and once again God's curse on wrong,  
Until the nation strike where points thy song.

## THE BOOKWORM vs. NATURE.

I. Marvel Howe so many can  
Seek Fields outdoors wherein to roam!  
My Greenwood Landor Fielding Gay,  
Give me a Holiday at home.

I fear the dogs and cows and bulls  
Might give me Payne I could not Dodge;  
My Barker's mild, and Cowper's Child  
Might lead my Bulwer past the Lodge.

I miss no flowers by the Brooke,—  
My flowers of rhetoric suffice.  
When Boothes are Browne and rills come down  
Swift from the Hill, I Read Fordyce.

I'm Savage,—O, the Dickens!—when  
To me some Young Green Suckling cries,  
"Longfellow, guide to the mountain-side."  
My Montaigne on my bosom lies.

The stile I sit on near the Burns  
Is any style that makes me Cross.  
My Hare is Wilde, though I'm beguiled  
From Sterne-ness then by dear old Moss.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

I Will Shakespears and Martial jeers  
Against the Ranke who make me Smart,  
And, not to Trench too "Lang" on space,  
A Words'worth Moore 'll express my Harte:

I save my Bacon and my Lamb  
For Vi(r)gils in the tranquil Knight,  
When a Plato' type and a meerschau pipe  
Knock nature higher than a kite.

### WHAT SEEKEST THOU?

What seekest thou, my friend?  
Wealth? — to be left when life is beginning.  
Power? — but none with the angel of death.  
Fame? — it but lasts with the butterfly's breath.  
Happiness? — selfish and fickle forever.  
Peace? — 'tis the crown of some other endeavor.  
Love? — seek love and bestow it, bestow it,  
Give love to the uttermost end,  
Seek it out and give freely and show it,  
For in love and love only, my friend,  
Blend the glories and beauties worth winning.

Born of eternity's breath,  
King of the angel of death,  
Wealth that endureth forever,  
Power that weakeneth never,  
Fame without shame or endeavor,  
Happiness true and supernal,  
Peace perfect, immortal, eternal,  
Fountain of the very God,  
Spirit of His smile and rod,  
Star of hope at the broken sod,—  
Verily, mighty, marvelous, whole,  
Love is the goal of the soul.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE GREATER SCALE.

I think this music-scale of sounds we know,  
This wondrous range from highest starlight roll  
To lowest thunder-bass, is to God's whole  
Vast music-realm as one short note, one low  
Half-heard sweet note of all, whose wider flow  
Shall some day seem God's voice to each pure soul.  
Then shall no jarring chord the rest control,  
For discord dies with all of earthly woe.

If but one note, fragmented thus for man,  
Hold in its heart a power occult as life,  
Bewitching as the loved one, strong as hope,  
What lordship infinite and sweeter than  
The rarest mortals dream through all their strife,  
Awaits the souls that now in discord grope!

## BEFORE THE FIRE.

He.

How strange! Sweet love, I have been traveling back  
To the twilight fields of first impressions, where  
Thy spirit first revealed to me my lack,  
Spreading a feast the while, but though I stare  
With eager eyes to find that happy morn,  
I cannot say what day my love was born.

She.

Hark to the wind! It blows so wild tonight  
I think perhaps 'tis loveless,—and so old!  
Find me its home, or trace its wayward flight  
For but one hour, ere thou seek to unfold  
The mystic ways of love. Why reason, dear,  
And seek again her gates when love is near?



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

He.

The gates of love! The reasons of the heart  
Pass reason, truly. Sweet, if I could tell  
Just why, when we two met no more to part,  
Just why or one the smallest word could spell  
Why love was born in me, I think that you  
Should doubt my love! — but this I cannot do.

She.

When Love Divine breathed out our souls, that die  
With him, he willed that we should meet and love.  
Because you, dear, are you and I am I,  
Behold, we love! And more may no man prove.  
We love, and love The Love that gave us bliss.  
We love! no word can satisfy like this.

### EASTER.

Awake! Behold! the sun of all the days  
Of all the year arises now on earth,  
The one great day whence all days take their worth.  
The Saviour lives! Rejoice, and love and praise  
The loving God who suffered in the clay's  
Strait fold, and died man's death to give man birth.  
Uplift the head, for this despairing dearth  
Called life shall rise to life no speech conveys.

He lives, and death is dead beneath his feet;  
He lives, and death is silent guide to life  
For all who seek the higher ways and meet.  
Uplift the head and sing, for no man's strife  
For Truth and God shall fail: today is born  
Life's greatest hope, the hope of life at morn.



# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## CONTENTMENT.

(From Gladwin's prose version of Saadi.)

"How strangely hard are fortune's ways to me!  
May not I murmur now, when fate  
Deprives my feet of shoes, nor lets me see  
The way to change my woful state?"

With heavy heart I spoke, and went within  
The mosque to pray, when, glancing 'round,  
A sight far worse convicted me of sin:  
A man who lacked both feet I found.

O Allah, I will give to Thee all praise!  
Forgive my murmuring, life's last,  
As first, and when Thy will my soul dismays  
I will recall Thy blessings vast.

## MODERATION.

(From Gladwin's prose version of Saadi.)

Ardsheer, the King, intent on doing well,  
Once questioned his physician on the weight  
Of food a man might daily eat, yet dwell  
Long on the earth before he reached death's gate.

A small amount the wise physician named.  
Surprised and all displeased, "What strength can be  
In one who stints him thus?" the King exclaimed,  
Too fond of eating quickly to agree.

Bravely the answer came: "Enough is this,  
(And more would be a burden indiscreet:)  
Should not we eat to live, and find our bliss  
In praising Allah? but you live to eat!"

# *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

## INSCRIPTION FOR A STATUE OF ANACREON.

(Theocritus, Fragment XVI.)

Pause and mark well this statue, you who roam,  
And say, when thou returnest to thy home,

“In Teos the statue of Anacreon  
Beheld I, he who surely far excelled  
All singing souls of all the ages gone.”

Add that with love for youth his bosom swelled,  
And nothing of Anacreon is withheld.

## CHARITY.

“O lack of charity. 'Tis such a grave offence,”  
Said I to self one day, “A book I will commence—”  
But here my soul replied, “First change your residence.”

## MY AGE.

My age? Five thousand years.— A somewhat lengthy span?  
But men who lived and wrote soon after time began  
Are truly part of me:— a very aged man.

## MATERNITY.

O miracle occult of womanhood!  
Methinks the angels still bow low in awe  
Before the silent workings of a law  
Whose secret ways no soul has understood,  
However men their wise conclusions draw.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Lo, hear them prate — restating laws, in sooth,  
But touching never explanation's hem!  
Meanwhile, each day the sacred diadem  
Of mortal life, beginning, crowns in truth  
Woman and man as holy parent-stem.

In reverence high hold woman! — chiefest, when  
A new immortal life is drawing near.  
In reverence hold her,—yea, although she sear  
Her frail or ignorant soul with sin; at men,  
I think, God hurls his curses most severe!

### LOVE'S PROOFLESSNESS.

Pain may display and prove itself at need:  
She hath a tongue wherewith to tell her woe  
What time the heart no longer dares to go  
Along the way alone; and she may feed  
Upon the gestures of despair and plead  
In silence deep; and, last of ways that show  
And ease the aching heart, the blessed flow  
Of tears may prove and succor her indeed.

But what hath love of outward sign or grace?  
How canst thou know my joy in loving thee?  
No words avail, nor play of eyes or face,  
And tears are meet but when thy tears I see.  
Love thou, sweetheart, and love shall prove apace  
How proofless yet how perfect love may be.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## A VALENTINE.

There is a weighty question  
That men would fain decide,  
And down through all the ages  
They've wrangled till they died;

A question big and puzzling  
On which we quarrel still,  
And doubt our own decisions —  
The freedom of the Will.

Are we the helpless children  
Of fates we must obey,  
Or may we plan and conquer,  
And have our own sweet way?

Now I will let the schoolmen  
Go on from bad to worse,  
And simply tell my sweetheart,  
In graceful, stately verse, (?)

That when my Heart is leading,  
And all my Will is free,  
Why, Fate must follow after  
And be a slave to me!

My heart leads on to you, dear,  
My blessed Valentine!  
I pray you take and keep it  
And give me yours for mine!

But if my heart and will, dear,  
Are yours "for keeps," O where  
Is all my boasted freedom  
That used to look so fair?

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

You stole it! I am still, then,  
Led on by Fate, not Will!  
And yet, if Will be happy  
My state is Freedom still!

O happy, blessed tangle!  
My dearest Valentine,  
The love that binds together,  
As one, your heart and mine,

May laugh and crook its finger  
At all that is obscure;  
The love that makes us one, dear,  
Is plain and sweet and sure.

### MY CELESTIAL VISITOR.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and  
weary,  
O'er a bill of twenty dollars I could never, never pay,  
O'er a bill for washing collars from the Chinaman o'er the  
way,  
While I wondered how the — (dash) — I could ever find the  
cash,  
Straight there came a mighty pounding, pounding on my  
chamber door,  
And I burrowed in the bed-clothes deeper than I was before,  
Deeper far than e'er before.

Now the room was nigh to freezing and, although it set me  
sneezing,  
And although it set me wheezing like a man who "does not  
snore,"  
Straight I flung the bed-clothes off me and I bounded to the  
door.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

I had heard that kick before and I bounded for that door,  
Meaning now to take my vengeance, meaning now to pay  
that score,  
With my fists;— he still was kicking at that frail and wormy  
door,—  
Meaning now to wade in gore.

"John," I shouted, "get you thither, or I'll send you to the  
whither  
Of the Chinese bourne eternal, with your legs and bills in-  
fernal!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Drop the curtain for a season! When I had again my reason  
On the bed I still was lying, with a doctor beautifying  
My black eyes, and I felt sore. Heaven and earth, but I was  
sore!  
And my bones I'm still caressing, for that heathen's awful  
blessing  
In the shape of wounds distressing, in the shape of marks  
galore,  
Will stay with me evermore!

### THE POET.

And where shall be my home, O You who bade me live?  
"My home, the country, where I dwell affirmative."

What friend will follow me, who would be loved, and love?  
"One who made you and friendship— Friend all friends  
above."

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

How shall I teach mankind, whose ways I may not know?  
"Interpret thine own heart, O child of joy and woe."

How shall earth nourish me, whose only skill is song?  
"What treasure has the lark, for whom my love is strong?"

Of what shall my heart sing, whose joy on earth is dead?  
"The immortal joys of truth shall sing through thee instead."

Will men reward my soul with all the love I crave?  
"They will reward thy soul — till sweeter were the grave."

What gain shall be for life so bitter, wan and frore?  
"My peace, my love, Myself, both now and evermore."

(A silence.)

Make quick my soul with Thee. The beauty of the truth  
Shall be my goal and song.  
"We twain as one shall be, for my immortal youth  
Shall live in soul and song."

### THE HERMIT.

"It is not good for man to live alone."

The idle talk upon the street,  
Forgotten when the hurrying feet  
Have left it pure again;  
The sight of those whose vileness shows  
And all their little good o'erflows,  
Till they are hid from men;

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

The senseless din and clamor loud  
Of those who seek to lead the crowd  
While they themselves are blind;  
The scornful glance of ignorance,  
The inward look of arrogance,  
Most pleased when most unkind,—

All these are but mere words to me;  
All these I know of as the sea  
Knows of the moiling land.  
For unappeased where mortals fed  
Their hungry souls with stones for bread,  
Long since, I marked a rand

O'er which nor they nor I shall pass,  
Till chemic death the wretched mass  
Strike through and clarify.  
I live beyond the world's control!  
I seek and find the tranquil goal  
Of peace and purity.

All day I breathe the mountain air,  
All day I face the firm, the fair,  
And nothing else beside.  
I pause,— 'tis infinitely still;  
I sing, I thrill, and many a rill  
Answers my surging tide.

I read one book and ask no more;  
I envy no man, and the lore  
Of human love I've thrown —  
Ah, God, forgive! Ah, God, I faint —  
Faint with the long, long years' restraint!  
Alone, alone, alone!



# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE UNPAID RANSOM.

One perfect day, while still within God's heaven,  
His chiefest angel sinned a sin so black  
He knew he never quite could be forgiven,  
And packed his trunk to seek earth's zodiac.

His last good-bye was said and, ready quite  
To leave the place he once had loved so well,  
He turned to go, when from the Wondrous Light  
There came a Voice, all sorrow to dispel:

"Thy sin shall be forgiven, forgotten quite,  
And thou shalt dwell with us as at thy birth,  
If thou wilt perfectly, in words polite,  
Define the soul called Woman, on the earth."

The first sweet words held Satan as in thrall,  
So great the joy of hope within his breast,  
But at the close he groaned. Then, with a drawl  
Sarcastic, bitter, said this erstwhile guest,

"I've made a thousand worlds and made them well,  
And done a million mightier acts for thee,  
But now — Good-bye. In heaven I cannot dwell:  
That deed's impossible for even me."

## JULY FOURTH.

Born with the heritage of liberty,  
Untrammelled liberty, we shout the name  
And glorify the word into that flame  
By night and cloud by day which solemnly  
Led on the Israelite. Beware! Too free  
Will be the body if the spirit's aim  
Is sunk within the letter, and the shame  
Of nakedness strike down our jubilee!

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

One only path leads up to freedom's height  
Whence purest love sends purest wisdom down,  
And in the name of freedom's holy light,  
And for the sake of the nation's holiest crown  
I say that Bondage to the Truth will lead —  
And only this — to Liberty indeed.

### QUATRAINS.

#### The Change.

Unconsciously we wail with life's first breath,  
So dark and dure the past throws down its shade;  
But ripening years to strength and peace persuade  
Our souls, and, consciously, we smile at death.

#### Wisdom.

He spelled the ground, knew flower and bird so well  
All students called him lord; loved beasts and man  
As beast, then sighed, "I find no God." Thus can  
The foolish prate, when self proves God and hell.

#### Inconsistency.

Regrettest thou that pearls on ocean's floor  
Lie useless, ne'er to reach a human mart?  
O foolish one, such losses to deplore,  
When many unused pearls are in thy heart.

#### Unselfishness.

To give, though we never receive,  
To bless,—hungry, tearful, yet strong,  
Ah, thus may a mortal achieve  
Immortality's right out of wrong.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## On the Voyage.

The best of books are valueless and vain  
Unless the readers know themselves the most,  
As rudders serve the boats on sea and coast  
With wisdom only when controlled by brain.

## Doubleness.

"Thy will be done!" Breathe out no sigh,  
O fearful soul, when saying this,  
Or some sweet joy His will makes nigh  
May pass thee — as unworthy bliss.

## The Poet.

Along the rays of light towards God  
He hastens, dreaming of their beauty,  
And sending back that vast white light  
In rainbow songs of love and duty.

## Poetry.

The spirit in and forming all —  
The beauty vaguely felt by souls  
That seek the substance more than goals  
Of earth — the life our lives forestall.

## The Sacred Reserve.

Not wholly may the barriers be broken  
Betwixt two earthly souls, however dear.  
Yet sorrow not, for this reserve is token  
Of a divinity we should revere.

## Silence.

Imperfect man could use no language now  
More pure and vast than this that frets the soul;  
But ah! beyond, the silence will teach how  
Perfection speaks to souls made pure and whole.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

### When Time Has Ceased.

When Time has ceased and back from whence we sprung  
We go, all men shall be forever young,  
And even here must God's immortal youth  
Begin in all who love immortal truth.

### Doubt.

The Wisdom mixed life's good and ill for man,  
But placed within his hand the sword of Doubt.  
Unused, that weapon answers not God's plan,  
And used too much His good is driven out.

### The Travel of the Soul.

We say of Birth, "A new life is begun;"  
When Love's day dawns, "Life now begins in me;"  
When Death draws nigh, "True life begins to be;"—  
Lo! is there ever new life to be won?

### "Little Things."

A flower, a narrow strip of sky, and time  
For her to pray,—no more, but these sufficed  
To keep her soul near God, though luring crime  
Stretched up, and deadly gold of man enticed.

### Beyond the Face.

The house was poor and mean, without a trace  
Of beauty. Sin or pain had made him base,  
I thought, but when I knew beyond the gate,  
Awestruck I said, "Would God I were as great!"

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## A VISION.

(Dedicated, without permission, to Stephen Crane.)

I saw a crimson mooly cow  
A-sitting down in a dormant golden meadow.  
"Look here," I shrieked,  
"What rattling madness possesses your infinite soul,  
To squat  
(Ungracefully) in this watery house?  
Dazzling night descends in four minutes,  
Night, mother of colds and hay-fever,  
And tomorrow the eternal gates of paradise —"  
"Mo-o-o!" remarked the crimson mooly cow,  
And I blushed,  
And rippled away in a hurry.

## MOTHER GOOSE, REVISED.

By, O Baby Bunting,  
Mama's gone a hunting;  
Gone to find a richer man,  
On the modern moral plan.

## COUPLETS.

Justice and Mercy.

Unto thyself give justice, and just the thing shall be;  
Unto the world give mercy,— true justice still from thee.

Freedom.

"No bonds at all! Give me sweet freedom," cries the youth;  
But freedom dwells in naught save bondage to the truth.

# *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

## Praise.

The praise of some is manna from on high,  
But when all praise, 'tis time for one to die.

## On Books.

The wisest lore that books have ever taught a soul  
Thirsting for truth is this:—Self is the greater scroll.

## Wealth.

The world may or may not my little wealth increase,  
But self may always win the eternal wealth of peace.

## Love to God and Man.

The one who loveth men to God may still be blind,  
But he who loveth God loves also all mankind.

## Sufficiency.

With self and God, a cave may still be paradise;  
With God and self unknown, the world cannot suffice.

## Unselfishness.

Work thou for self alone, and life shall die at death;  
For others live, and lo! death shall be God's own breath.

## Double Gain.

Within the Eternal Heart I strove to lose my soul,  
And found myself the more the more I found The Whole.

## Narrowness.

To love mankind and not The Man without a peer,  
Is like the love of stars when the sun is shining clear.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## Eternity.

Eternity's soft winds my sultry soul sweep o'er,  
As travelers feel sea-breezes ere they reach the shore.

## The Beloved.

She smiles, and the smiles of the others seem tears;  
She weeps, and their sorrow like laughter appears.

## The Love of Many — and One.

Though love were given me from all beneath the sun,  
'Twould still be somewhat less than just the love of one.

## Two Women.

The one had youthful beauty: with years all graces fled;  
The other plain but loving, the years to beauty led.

## Friendships.

'Twixt man and woman, friendship must be discreet and wise,  
But friendship with the authors no man may criticise.

## Books and Friends.

A book is like a flower pressed with tender care;  
A friend is like a garden of living flowers rare.

## A Puzzle.

A trifle will persuade men to folly or to sin,  
But mighty reasons only will plant the good within.

## The Intervals.

Commune with nature often but still with man remain:  
Seek nature as a silence, mankind as language plain.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

### Beauty.

No dream of beauty shall remain unsatisfied;  
The shadow proves the sun,— and think you God has lied?

### The Difference.

We judge ourselves by that which we profess,  
But others by their actions and their dress.

### The Crowded Isle.

When peace midst men departs, since all their ways seem ill,  
Sigh for no desert isle, for one would be there still.

### A Test.

Said one, "I trust no man, for all men are untrue."  
"Or false or true," said I, "that settles trust in you!"

## THE TWO GOSPELS.

Entranced with Beauty, love made once so wise  
Her votaries they writ a gospel called  
The Gospel of the Body, and enthralled  
Thereby all eager ears, all wandering eyes.  
O wondrous Greeks, who knew the treasures  
Of Beauty, and our simple lore forestalled,  
Not since your day — our workers half-appalled,  
Work idly — has art seen such victories.

Praise for the Greeks! And yet, a victory  
Still incomplete and dumb, ten thousand times  
Divine, and white as earth's most perfect goal; —  
The Gospel of the Body, that must die!  
But deathless Beauty's full and finer chimes  
Call us to write the Gospel of the Soul.



# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE SIGHT OF A SOUL.

Exalted heavenward by a night of prayer,  
A saintly monk forgot the bonds of clay  
And dared to ask of God one glimpse, one ray  
Of light from Him — the Infinite! A glare  
Of sudden awful glory filled the bare  
And narrow cell, until the light of day  
Tenfold increased had been but twilight gray,  
And on his face the monk fell in despair.

"O God, forgive me! I am mortal still,  
And not of heaven: have mercy and depart."  
The glory faded and a Voice did thrill  
Each fibre of that pure but human heart:  
"How couldst thou bear to read a higher scroll  
When thou hast feared a naked human soul?"

## FOR ONE SWEET DAY.

Now just for this sweet day, dear Nature, let  
Thy soul draw mine away from human fret  
And careless grief, to perfect bliss with thee.  
This day let singing brook and murmuring tree  
Teach me thy secret strength and peace until  
I reach thy heart of youth, from out the chill  
Of wanton human love, too deep and cold  
For simple ones who love thee. Dear, withhold  
No longer balm and blessing; purify  
The one who waits on this sweet day — come nigh  
And silently restore my youth, till frost  
Of life and dark of death are swiftly lost  
At touch of thine. Show me thy face, I pray,  
For this sweet day, for one entrancing day.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## HIS SONG.

### In Youth.

"Sweet dream of beauty, live, and be  
My hope, my joy, till words shall come.  
Thank God, the world shall worship thee  
And marvel why all men were dumb  
Till my lips humbly set thee free."

### In Manhood.

"My song must wait: earth's many cares  
Crowd day and night, and nearer things  
Than singing songs thwart songs and prayers.  
When these are past, sweet hidden springs  
Of peace and strength shall drown despairs."

### At Death.

"Alas! the end, and nothing won.  
My dream of beauty, fare thee well!  
I hoped mankind to cheer, but none  
Of all my thoughts were born. The knell  
Must sound for song and soul undone."

### The World.

"Pass to thy rest, O noble soul,  
As we bow down before thy song.  
The song of songs was thine, whose whole  
Pure life unselfish fought the wrong:  
THY LIFE, that Song is on God's scroll."

**THOUGHTS AND PASTELS.**

In the forests of darkness and sadness  
There are glades from the glories above,  
And the guides to their infinite gladness  
Is the light of an infinite love.

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THOUGHTS AND PASTELS.

Deep subjects and high ideals can hardly be dwelt on too much, nor can a thoughtful presentation of them ever be out of place.

Whoso thinks at all, speaks perforce, and because it is as impossible for him to keep silence, if he be honest, as it is for the lighted candle to extinguish itself.

Some books are flowers from the plant of life, and no thoroughly honest man will allow any bloom of his life to be seen by others unless he is sure it possesses more truth or beauty than their opposites.

In our own work we take as much pleasure in the process as in the result, but in the work of others conclusions alone yield us the most pleasure and profit.

We can read in a few seconds that which it took one hours, perhaps, to think out and write to his satisfaction; ergo, we should rarely pass unfavorable or even favorable judgment on any matter before having considered it carefully. Thought demands thought.

A true man cares not whether his book die or live save as he cares for the death of falsehood and the life of truth.

Correcting a bad habit: Making over a riding gown.

If winter comes, can spring be far behind? Certainly: about six months.

The painter's hardest task is to draw money.

The censure that we deserve is what hurts.

Though the two feelings are often confounded, recognition of truth is not sympathy with it.

We do not fully understand ourselves,—yet lay down rules for others.

Bondage to truth is the only freedom known.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Evil is limited, good is unlimited. We see no end to good, and straightway are discouraged because so far from perfection. Slowly, slowly, my friend.

A religious man adapts himself to God, while a fanatic adapts God to himself.

The more we love ourselves the more we please God. The less we love ourselves the more we please Him. Both statements are true.

By analyzing others we become harsh and uncharitable. By analyzing ourselves we become sympathetic, gentle, charitable.

Truly to learn from experience the rules that we draw from our experience must be applied to many other things.

Hate tends to separate and to kill; love glories in bringing together and uniting and harmonizing all things.

Open to all men is the greatest achievement of man — the grand, steady growth of soul; limitless, infinite in possibilities, endless in results, glorious beyond the world's worth and the reason for our existence here.

Thoughts are more often the centers of horizons than the ultimate expression of facts.

Sad indeed is it that the debts put on us by the friendship of one are not always payable to that one.

Noble ideas are man's compass, pointing to the north pole of perfection, while friendship is a magnet. When the magnet interferes with the accurate working of the compass, that magnet must be removed though the heart break.

Men value positiveness so highly that they will sooner forgive wrong judgment than doubt.

Seek not perfection. Let not one fault in a man estrange you from him, or you will be unworthy of friendship and alone all through life.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Love can know no greater bitterness than the knowledge that its object is in some grave way unworthy of love. Yet true love, under some circumstances, will but cling the closer to its object.

Even as no one man is perfectly representative of a nation, so no one friend answers to all we feel when thinking of friendship. Yet friends are good!

Instinct, inclination, conscience and will combined cannot keep one in the right path; knowledge must be sought and applied, and that continually.

The majority of people hate the sense of responsibility; it is well for readers that the majority of writers do not belong to that class.

He who never exaggerates is incapable of speaking the truth. But equally unwise and dangerous is he who always exaggerates. The world is neither a level plain nor a level mountain.

If you would be a ruler of men, be ruled yourself absolutely by some great idea. Because: The world wouldn't bid more than two cents for your naked ego, but for a man plus an idea it would very likely give as much as — five.

We give explanations to those only who do not ask them.

Absolute evil and absolute virtue alike acknowledge no law.

Human nature is the highest and lowest, saddest and happiest, foolishest and wisest, cruelest and kindest, simplest and most composite, purest and most corrupt, most despondent and hopeful, most selfish and unselfish, most loving and hateful; yes, the most devilish as well as the divinest, thing on the face of the earth. For wondrous and awful variety, and this in even one individual, no mixture of the chemist can equal human nature.

Words leak. Yet, somehow, their spirit enters the cup open to receive it.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

A bad conscience may be the cause of insomnia, but often it is the bad conscience of the men and women who wrong us that keeps us awake.

More likely is it that small love will bring great love down to its own level than that the large love will make the small increase.

Every person is a fool in some particular. Therefore, strike gently at the others, my friend.

The kind-hearted man feels bitterly the difficulty of excusing himself without accusing others.

Thoughts unexpressed are only half possessed.

The best judge of human nature at sight may be all at sea when he attempts to estimate people of another nationality.

A friend, a good man, told me that he had lost all the records of his business—copies of letters, notes worth thousands of dollars, etc.—in a fire. I told him that the Recording Angel will never suffer in like manner. But to some men this would be small consolation.

Don't jest with strangers. Nine times out of ten they will misunderstand you.

Emphasis in the wrong place creates the weakness it would avoid.

The reason that some men cannot keep their heads above water is that they are helping others to do so.

Faith: Riches we cannot hide, exhibit nor give away.

Contempt: In an inferior, jealousy; in a superior, weakness.

Words: The shadows of our thoughts.

Vices: The faults of our ancestors.

Socialism: Dividing with the other fellow.

Anarchy: Compelling the other fellow to divide with us.

Thought is practical only when it keeps practical things in subjection.



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

If flowers are the language of angels, music is the language of God.

Our comforts render us complacent, lazy; our sorrows keep us painfully awake and also force comforts to minister strength.

Hard it is to feel that what we know would be our best thoughts we cannot express to even ourselves.

Strife for truth is a kind of praise to God.

He who teaches men to think does them a nobler service than he who teaches them all other things combined.

Man is the soul of nature, and each man is to himself the soul of nature. That is, if he be noble and love nature he will see in her just so much of beauty and worth as he is, and if he be mean himself he will care little for her and see hardly a shadow of her beauty.

The law of compensation is spiritually what the law of conservation of energy is materially. No act in either world ends with the act itself.

The devil hates solitude.

When we look back on ourselves as we were one year ago we see wherein we were foolish and how often we committed evil. Let us be humble at the present time, for in a year from now we shall again reach the same conclusion.

Paradoxical but true: the greater the heart the less room in it for evil.

Wouldst thou have thy burdens lightened? Help thy brother in his need and tenfold shall it be returned thee.

Is it the ambition of thy life to greatly bless thy fellow-men? This may be more easily accomplished, perhaps, than thou thinkest. Begin with thyself, live purely, nobly, unselfishly, and so far as this is done thy purpose is fruited. Do more if thou canst, but to govern one kingdom is more than most men do.



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Most of the evil wrought in the world is the result of thoughtlessness, not premeditation, but it is none the less an evil, and, seeing it could have been prevented, a crime.

All knowledge is good in itself, but unless a man has omnipotent strength he had better let some of it alone till he has.

When we cannot at the same time be true to ourselves and true to others we must be true to ourselves. Right may fall back one step in our direction but it gains two in another.

To tire of a thing is no sign of inconstancy; rather is it the reverse, as it may show we are true to a higher principle.

What does originality consist in except in appropriating and using to an unusual and striking advantage facts and observations which are public property? When comes a mind great enough to properly appreciate and present common occurrences—and all occurrences are common—then we say: Behold a genius!

Gain first God's approval, then thine own, setting thy small watch by the great Regulator, and let the opinion of the world count for naught. Do right; if the world approve, well; if not, thou lovest but a trifle.

Recognition of truth is not sympathy with truth, although often confounded with it.

Men of great attainments receive too much praise, while men of small calibre, who achieve, in consequence, little, do not receive enough praise, though they may have exerted more strength proportionately.

To the wise man no thing is strange, because every thing is strange.

We speak of "great men"; is this to our credit? Yes, and No. Yes, because we ought to recognize a man's natural and acquired qualities, and No, because we ought to be his equal in striving for Truth, in which alone true greatness consists.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Steadily and more clearly do I see that there is nothing in the world but little things. These little things, however, acquire a startling significance when viewed in this light.

When a man works so much that he has no time or room for pride he receives more honor from others than he could ever give himself.

Most of us are not strong enough to be gentle; we are weak, and attempt to conceal it by indifference and rudeness.

Man is a spirit consisting of two principles, and the stage beyond the period of earthly existence is the continuing and perfecting of the principle which predominated here. Which rules thee the more, Good or Evil?

The best—noblest—diplomacy is to have none.

In wanting to be loved, better give love to an hundred persons who do not love thee than wait for some one to love thee first.

True sorrow for sin indicates such advance that the soul will not again fall as readily into it.

The soul should not, and in thinking persons does not, find any thing purely negative. Each thing assists or retards progress.

As the fact of the earth's moving can be proved only by an appeal to reason, so the fact of future life can be proved only by an appeal to intuition, and not, in either case, by the senses.

Almost every man is honestly anxious for himself to develop, yet seems naturally to think of every one else as stationary.

We do not fully understand ourselves, yet lay down rules for the conduct of others!

If each man had half as much charity for the world in general as he has for himself, strife of all kinds would cease.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

If we are strong and wish it, no thing can injure us and each thing will do us good.

Many people pray too much in words; the best prayer, the only true prayer is work.

The very fact that we cannot always decide a point proves our indefinite and immense capabilities, and should be the source of an awful joy. Did we feel a limit in thinking we should have to decide our powers mortal.

Set that man down as one who looks on death as the end of all, who always finds language adequate to express his feelings.

Better be wholly unsuccessful in a right course than successful in a wrong one.

While genius has little regard for common-sense, a lack of common-sense does not necessarily indicate genius.

Of ourself we tell only the good; of our neighbors perhaps the good, but certainly the bad.

To expect love to be perfectly satisfied with anything less than love in return, is as futile as expecting a woman's fan to create a vacuum in the open air.

Our capacity for learning from others is proportioned to our capacity for putting ourself in their place.

People who always want a reason for everything resemble the man who would demand proof of the statement that the shortest line between two points is a straight line.

Strange, that in things temporal we desire to possess others' goods, or at least goods like others', but in things spiritual think our own attainments the best! It shows how much more strongly we are affected through the senses than through the soul.

If we are dissatisfied with our attainments there is hope for us. Then so long as dissatisfaction exists we should be satisfied.

After all, viewed aright, nothing can be too much trouble in itself.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

One reason why so many persons feel a great reserve towards others is that the disagreeables are on the surface, and what we wish to say does not harmonize with the externals.

The law of contrast is stronger than the law of harmony. This is one of the reasons why discords are sometimes written in music, "that harmony should be prized."

The originality which takes a form unwise in itself is better than a slavish conformity to society, which would mold all into a dead life. The only trouble lies in the fact that the originality takes a wrong form.

The habit of questioning everything, which by so many is considered dangerous to purity, is absolutely necessary; the only danger is from false judgment.

However much we may think our ideal man is the combination of the qualities most nearly perfect of all our acquaintances, he is most nearly like ourself.

God's curse on man was not that he must labor, but that the labor necessary to existence should antagonize the soul and hinder its development. We must eat before we think. Yet with watchfulness this very curse may be transmuted into a blessing.

The philosopher sees Truth, and sees it in its barest form; the poet sees also the beauty of Truth.

Troubles and griefs are the rain-storms of the soul.

The wicked man values his reputation, not his character, while the righteous man cares for his character and but very little for his reputation.

Bondage to Truth is the only freedom known.

Perfect knowledge of one natural object, one blade of grass for instance, would explain all earthly things.

We demand sympathy, but give only pity.

It is better to decide, be the decision right or wrong, than to be continually wavering.



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

And still, better waver than decide and then never be willing to change.

He who cannot change his opinions is a fool; he who will not change them is a knave.

Age petrifies most people as silica hardens wood, but a few resemble the evergreen, which is larger and more symmetrical in old age than in youth.

Love is the greatest developer of the soul; hence love is the end, the object, of our present existence.

For thinking people condensed information is best, but most people do not think for themselves, hence the immense amount of mental rubbish. The daily paper is as much a curse as a blessing.

"Out of sight, out of mind;" if this were quite true, how happy we might be!

Look on the worst side of the past, and the best side of the future.

We can best impress ourselves on others by our love. Wisdom repels at first, but love attracts, and opens the way for wisdom. Hence, if you would do the most good, love.

If we be God's children, it is impossible, in the full sense of that word, for Him to forsake us: can He forsake Himself?

I hold that idea to be a true one, that was held in former times more extensively than now, that each man is an actual part of God. Like all best things it can be perverted into a most serious evil, but if I believe it to be true, I may say so. It is an awful thought. It throws a light on the problem of our existence, and makes our lives more sublime than ever.

Evil is limited; good is unlimited. We see no end to good, and straightway are discouraged because we are so far from perfection.

Silence is Perfection; language and all other material

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

things are imperfect and very annoying at times, but we think of Silence and rejoice. I sometimes think God, Heaven, Eternity, all dwell in Silence.

There is really no "reward" and "punishment" for good and evil. Remorse for sin, which we call "punishment," is a part of sin, its culmination, and good finds Heaven to be simply the perfection of itself.

Self-denial is the purest form of selfishness.

Few people can have what they want in the material world, but in the realm of the mind men can be pretty nearly what they WILL to be.

We are aware, by its effects, of a power not connected with the senses. It appeals to the soul from all material objects, from some more strongly than from others, but it eludes our comprehension and even grasp; we cannot define it. We are perhaps reading a book and feel strongly drawn to take up some other book unread before, when, lo! this last passage is a companion to or climax of the first. We feel a presence in the room, and may perhaps know whom it is, yet we learned it not through the five senses. Who shall instruct us in this language, this intuition of the spirit?

The souls of mankind combined would not make a God.

Thoughtlessness is the most extreme selfishness in its relation to others, and the worst possible evil in its relation to ourself.

Our highest moments are our truest. We must judge ourselves by such moments, and measure our acts and attainments by their height and not by the low standard of common hours.

If every man were so good as in his heart he believes himself to be, five men would fully supply the world.

Woe betide a man if in his care for his house he starve the master of the house! We must eat and take care of the body in many ways, but most men end with that, forgetting the soul.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

One's habitual thoughts react on the will which formed them, each strengthening the other. Do we like to think? Good. Are our thoughts pure and beautiful? Better. And if they fruition into life, best of all, and the reason why we have the thinking faculty.

Concentration of thought on one idea at a time, long continued, it may be, is the secret of most success, most knowledge, and while we are about it why not dwell on worthy objects? Most men drift without aim; grasp the oars and get somewhere!

Marriage, while giving one person to the other, makes each more capable of blessing others. Thus while in a form selfish, marriage is still more unselfish.

The greatest thinker is he who can tell us most about ourself.

The older the body the younger—purer—the soul should be.

Strike your colors to no man. You, too, are a man, and must live originally, for yourself and out of yourself.

A religious man adapts himself to God, while a fanatic adapts God to himself.

All known things may be classed under four names: materially, dust and soul; spiritually, good and evil.

Geniuses are they who understand the art of expression, first to themselves, then outwardly. They utter what others only feel.

The highest practicality is the materialization of ideality.

The pessimist says, There is a valley for every hill; the optimist says, There is a hill for every valley.

When souls shall be able to communicate with each other by other means than the body, they will give and receive perfection, they will know and will be at peace simply through existing.

Soul is supreme and should be indifferent to every conceivable thing but itself. This is why great men so often



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

shock us by their disregard of bodily and social laws; but our fault it is, not theirs.

A man, like a tree, should grow heavenward in defiance of all material laws: let him but say, I am superior, and he is superior.

The only result of staring into the mystery of human life is to bring tears to the eyes, tears of pain to some and of joy to others.

A soul, perfection, can never express itself perfectly through the medium it has at present, an imperfect body.

While we live in the past and the future, we possess only the past.

As in music one continued discord ruins the entire piece, so one continued sin may ruin a man's whole life.

Praise tends to lower some men's standard, censure always strengthens.

Music is the expression of silence. Music, of all things which appeal to the senses, is a link and the only link between heaven and earth. It appeals to the senses, it is true, but is the purest, least earthly, the one perfect thing, of all things which do so appeal.

There are three uses of love. First, the prostitution of love into sexual passion, which is — what we call — beastly. Second, the degradation of love, into finding in man the end of love. The third use of love, which alone is right, is the thought of love as Perfection — another word for God — each man and, if you wish, each living object, being but a fragment. Hence, love is reverential. Also, the truest love always has an element of dissatisfaction in it, cannot contain itself with less than the whole.

If life be hard, it is so that we may learn how to make it easy.

Because things in this world are wholly relative, it is sometimes true that an act which is wrong to one man is right to another.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Love must be active or it will die.

Perfection is the marriage of matter and mind. Or, it is when the attainments of matter equal the attainments of mind, or when ability equals thought.

If we were able to see with the bodily eye a true man, that is, the spirit, as, say, Emerson, the sight would dazzle us. We could not see even so small a part of God without trembling.

The isolation of a great mind must be one of the worst concomitants of genius.

The more we love a person, the less, as a rule, we feel like talking when in his presence. The very consciousness of being near him is all-sufficient.

What more may man ask than to be literally a child of God?

If he who criticises does not benefit others or himself, he is doing no good, but is "creation's blot, creation's blank."

Slang is dethroned poetry.

All excel in one or two good traits; he who excels in most is the great man.

Every man owes the world all the nobility of character it is possible for him to become possessed of. One of the few things wherein man underestimates himself is his influence on others. The world is more strongly affected by him than he thinks.

Speak nothing but good of the dead; we know enough evil of the living.

To be never discouraged is not always a sign of wisdom.

God is the author of the two grandest poems ever written, Woman, and Nature.

It is our bounden duty to ennoble ourselves and others. This demands work, but neglect is a crime.

God never allows an unnecessary person; every living human being is essential to creation. He has a com-

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

mission to fulfil, and just damnation awaits the man who runs away or wilfully neglects his work.

Hope is frequently inverted experience.

Each thing in the material world is symbolic. The primary reason for its existence is that it may bless the soul of man.

To have our good acts evil spoken of is better than to have our bad acts well spoken of.

Let fancy fly, but judgment should walk.

Almost all men believe that right shall ultimately triumph, but why do they not act up to this conviction? Because they are either thoughtless or selfish.

The world may owe you a living, but the nobility that you owe the world is a greater debt and will forbid you taking your due.

More great poems are lived than written.

The man who works not with either body or brain is a curse. He is a very devil, robbing himself, mankind, and God.

The human heart must overflow when great grief or joy comes, or else, perhaps unconsciously, suffer physically.

The mysterious is always the most fascinating.

Most people can bear blame from enemies, but few can withstand flattery from friends.

Love is a paradox: beginning with regard for one, it is not diminished but greatly increased by being allowed to overflow on others.

With the exception of love, its mother, nothing terrestrial satisfies a man so completely as to have a woman whom he likes jealous of him!

A verbal promise is as binding morally as a written promise is legally.

Make a distinction between inherited and acquired nobility. The one we deserve no credit for, the other we deserve all credit for.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Unapplied wisdom is like pearls in the sea.

No act is negative; it is either good or bad.

The rule, Silence is golden, is generally true, but there are many times when silence is dishonoring.

Throughout Nature, as we know her, nothing is lost: apparently destroyed, the object has simply assumed another form. So it is in the moral world: good deeds, bad words, all leave ineffaceable impressions.

All persons displease me in some way; shall I, therefore, refuse to love them? Nay; I should rather exert myself to love them so much for the good that is in them that my thoughts of their good qualities shall outweigh my thoughts of their bad ones.

The highest joys are inseparable from the greatest griefs, and whether or no both shall affect us for good depends on ourself.

He who never believes the simple statements of others cannot expect to be ever believed himself.

The heart that beats strongest for suffering man is the heart best capable of loving God.

Wisdom is one of the few good things which sometimes comes to man unsought.

True greatness is tolerant of others' scrutiny; the mean soul cannot bear investigation.

A man proud without reason is a most detestable creature; proud with reason he is allowable, but negative.

The man who is humble enough to acknowledge that others' opinions are sometimes better than his own is wise enough to be seldom wrong.

Good blesses the doer of it more than the receiver.

When nobody has anything to say against me, let me die!

The soul's instinct must be the decider of what is right and what is wrong, but as every soul is more or less imperfect, it follows that men will always differ in their

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

judgment. We have no absolute standard of perfection, or, rather, we are not able to either see perfection or agree on a definition of it.

The same qualities precisely are in all men, but not in equal proportions.

Men break promises made to a multitude when they keep those made to one person, but in other matters they honor the mass even when they despise every individual man in it.

Probably thought is as substantial to a spirit as material things are to the body.

Our joys may cease and we are sad for a time; but when hope ceases neither the past nor the present can please us.

It should be our aim not to keep the Sabbath holier than the other days, but to make all the days as holy as the Sabbath.

Paralysis of the soul is the worst disease on earth, and the most common.

Love curves on itself and rewards the lover more than the beloved.

Society and solitude are of equal necessity. In society we receive: in solitude we digest. But ah, blessed are we if in solitude we can both receive and digest.

Despair is the illegitimate child of Misfortune and Weakness.

Our life is a cloud, hiding the sky of eternity.

When truths seem not to harmonize be sure a link, a third truth, connecting the two others, is missing. Truths must necessarily harmonize, but our imperfect knowledge raises confusion.

Which is harder, to see the evil in the persons we like, or to see the good in those we do not like?

Life forms the body,—and then is subject to it!



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

If we were as afraid of being wrong as we are of being serious, we would be so serious that we would not be so often wrong.

Eternity is not prolonged time, but a state.

The wise man knows the fool for a fool, but the fool can never know the wise man for a wise man, or he would be wise himself. The greater may include the less and still be great, but the part is never more than a part.

Each man is necessarily the standard, in one sense, by which he measures all else, both man and matter.

If we did as well as we know, we would soon be perfect.

Progress self-evidently involves life, and life is, we may say, the growing principle. Now bodily life of all kinds feeds on material lower than itself, but soul-life feeds on principles, or life, higher than itself.

Many persons' externals are more beautiful than they themselves, as, face and manners, but persons inwardly beautiful are usually beautiful in externals also.

The peace of life is a totally different thing from the peace of death.

Things which we absolutely know but which, from the nature of the case, are not provable to others and which we will not explain, most people will neither believe nor forgive us for affirming.

The highest compliment that can be paid to a woman is to treat her as a man should be treated; that is, frankly and honestly, with the utmost courtesy and purity.

We judge ourselves by what we do, that is, the good; we judge others by their omission of the good, that is, their sins.

The hypocrite is never so near exposure as when his righteousness is called into question; no one shall question his righteousness.

The worst form of conceit is that springing from humility.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

The pain in ecstasy of feeling is caused by the inability of the body to keep pace with the unusual demands of the soul.

Senses, or the sense, may be right, spirit is right. Sense involves a mixture of evil with good; spirit is wholly pure.

The worst hunger is that of the heart, for love: the worst satiety is that of the heart, being obliged, through not finding any one to love, to expend all its love-wealth on itself.

I wish to fear nothing that I know of but fear.

Instinct is the sun, reason the moon.

The fear of intruding is often a great discourtesy: friends must not act like acquaintances.

Reason is confined to the earth, spirit, or intuition, is unconfined.

We should prepare for death? Not so: we should prepare for something more solemn—Life.

Irreverence for the name of God is by no means the only form of profanity. Any good thing,—person, object, or idea, may be profaned.

There are two classes of people to whom we reveal ourselves; our friends, because they understand us, and a certain other class because—they are stupid.

The more we love ourselves the more we please God: The less we love ourselves the more we please God. Both these statements are true.

Perfect freedom of soul can never be obtained without first conforming perfectly to the natural needs of the body.

The best friend distrusts himself more than he does his friend.

If we with all the heart desired perfection, we should be perfect. The perfect desire and the attainment are identical.

“Pain is a sign of life,” but life need not be a sign of pain.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Working as a fragment of the whole, a man may honorably accept any aid offered. Working selfishly, to accept any aid is dishonorable.

Labor may be dignified, but some men are compelled to be decidedly undignified in doing it.

For a person who has never loved to try to understand it is like a blind person endeavoring to judge of the merits of a picture. He may handle it, and possibly gain some little impression of it through the finger tips, but—!

Excess of hope is despair.

Intuition compels, reason advises.

Men reverence the dead more than the living, and thus prove themselves fools.

The real basis of all love, all friendship, all good-will, is reverence.

The strength as well as the difficulty of renouncing is exactly proportioned to the intensity of the feeling present, if we but knew it.

Affectation is the desire to appear different from what we are, but it is sometimes confused with the desire to develop and improve ourselves.

Abstract truth has little influence over us; to draw us strongly it must be connected with something earthly.

The more we lean on others the more capable we are of strengthening others.

"The world is a chaos; life is a puzzle and a farce;" granted for the sake of the argument; perhaps it is thy sole business to bring some order into the world, and to solve life and make it serious by the dignity of thy actions.

Is the darkness of the beyond worse than the folly of the past? Take heart, then, be brave and wise, using well thy materials, however poor they may be.

Which prefer you to see, a symmetrical and handsomely carved statue of wood, or an ugly one of ivory? If compelled to choose, which would you be?



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

What if all the range of notes in sound that we can hear, from lowest bass to highest treble, should be but one note in the whole of music,—the middle C, say, fragmented for man!

Knowledge is often more lamentable than ignorance, because used wrongly. Still, learn at any cost.

We sometimes utter truths and yet are not able to explain how we come to say them, nor even to argue out our reasons for believing them. There is no disputing with the reasons of the soul, no proof outside of themselves.

The home of the body is stationary; the home of the soul is everywhere, in all things, in the realm of the mind and the realm of the spirit. But some souls seem to have no home!

This delight in the mysterious is the vague endeavor to find the purpose and soul which we instinctively feel to be in all, to which we are related.

Love for one cannot be confined to that particular soul; it will overflow on our friends. This overflow is a test of love.

By analyzing others we become harsh and uncharitable: by analyzing ourselves we become gentle and sympathetic.

Hope must be for something definite, else it is not hope but uneasy longing.

To give up one's rights is perhaps as often a sign of weakness as of strength.

Both old age and youth make mistakes, old age from being too conservative, youth from being too radical, but if the world is to advance it is more necessary to be radical than conservative.

There are three kinds of reserve, natural reserve or bashfulness, the reserve of purity, which shrinks from the touch of some persons, and the reserve of unworthiness or weakness, which wishes to appear better than it is.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Actions are plain, but the motives being mixed or hidden entirely, we are more apt to judge wrongly than rightly.

And we cannot rightly divide between the motives for our own actions, yet pass judgment on others' actions!

The deepest love makes the greatest mistakes.

Just as we may apprehend Divinity but not comprehend it, so must we apprehend that others may be right, whether we can justify their deeds or not. What is wrong to one person may be perfectly right to another.

If any one thing more than another proves the nobility of man it is that 'tis easier to love than to hate.

We might live in perpetual silence without losing very much, but no one can live in a perpetual round of words without losing very, very much.

Insults are unconscious tributes to superiority.

Hope is the fountain of life, renewing us daily from the immortalities of perfection.

Evil apprehends good but cannot comprehend it: good both apprehends and comprehends evil.

Earthly evil may be wholly evil, but no earthly good is unalloyed.

Both the fanatic and the true man say, "Pursue Truth, at any cost," but the fanatic looks only at the end, the true man considers the means also.

"To thine own self be true;" truly, the most difficult thing in the world.

If the head comprehends, we may still converse, whether the heart comprehend or not, but when neither heart nor head understand, conversation ceases.

What we receive is almost exactly proportioned to what we first give or are willing to give.

To truly learn from experience, the rules we can draw from one experience must be applied to other things. Few people do this, and thus many never learn from experience.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

To always decide slowly is folly: to always decide quickly is much worse folly.

Foolishly saved means foolishly spent.

Silence and tears are the only things that can express extreme joy as well as extreme grief.

Fate deals the cards, and fate may decree that we lose; but we may make many mistakes in playing them, and our mistakes are worse than anything done by fate.

Pain should be to us not as a hornet but as a bee: both sting, but from the bee we receive honey also.

Man may develop himself into the greatest thing or the smallest thing on earth.

Does the builder question the bricks as to whether they would rather be near the bottom of the wall or the top, on the inside or the outside? They all have their places, and each place is important. Who knows how greatly he is needed in the world, or what a crime it would be to remove himself?

If man trembled as much over his sins as he does over the future, he would have less reason to dread anything the future might bring.

Do nothing of which you would be ashamed to have the world know.

Men honor men when they do not honor God, but they cannot honor God without honoring men.

Body wavers, soul is steadfast; body needs change, soul needs no change: body asks proof: soul needs no proof: body doubts, soul believes.

Soul can teach reason, but reason cannot teach soul. Soul is at once plaintiff and defendant, lawyer and witness, judge and sheriff.

The bad usually improve on acquaintance; the good sometimes lose.

We should instruct ourselves, not others, or, at least, ourselves first, then others through us.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Beauty must contain truth, or 'tis not beauty. As well try to find the rose's perfume independent of the rose as to expect beauty to be independent of the truth.

We win our friends more through their nobleness than our own.

Simplicity is one of the most necessary and profound studies of life.

Sincerity always demands and receives respect, but not sincerity nor frankness nor strength combined are able to root a fact in another man. Truth must first be present to some extent, then these aids-de-camp may assist.

Words are but the body of thought, and like our earthly body cannot be fully controlled; nor do they exactly express us.

Thou art dissatisfied because thy good acts are not admitted as such, not even seen? The greatest buildings have the deepest foundations; many stones have to be hidden, and who can say but your acts are as necessary, nay, more so, than many others, to some building too large for our eyes to measure?

Great men seek simplicity in thoughts, in words, in illustrations, and are greatly fundamental. Small men seek greatness as if it were a fact in itself, and not a great combination of small things.

Head-analysis and heart-feeling do not make a happily-married couple.

Looking for flowers without thorns is the most likely way of finding thorns without flowers.

It is the duty of conscience not only to make action accord with present belief, but to guide the mind when it contemplates changing its beliefs. Beliefs change because the mind honestly seeks truth, but conscience, properly speaking, never changes.

Grief finds no rest in rest, but only in action.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Many a person's most subtle thoughts and exquisite impressions are lost to himself and others because no one responds exactly to them, when if they did so respond other and wiser shades, from still more remote and delicate recesses of the mind, would come firmly forth, to the surprise and joy of both.

The most valuable silence is that which is judiciously used to punctuate and accentuate speech with.

Love is the force that unites, that harmonizes. Perfect love means perfect union.

The individual is most himself when he becomes most universal.

Only he who is perfect need never apologize.

Half our ambition is caused by the faith of others in us.

Those who object to any one's quoting frequently never say anything themselves worthy of being heard, much less quoted.

Paradoxes are the most simple and yet profound expressions obtainable of truth. This is because they contain both sides of truth, or, I might say, they bring the poles of truth together.

We may argue about duty, but not against it.

It requires as much wisdom to be wisely stupid as to be simply wise.

Some people are so very over-conscientious and so very obstinate that if they once get the idea into their head that something is wrong, if God himself should tell them that it is right I verily believe they would contradict Him.

Be as wise and strong and as nearly perfect in every way as possible, or the time will inevitably come when you will falter or perhaps fail for lack of what you might have had, or should have been.

God himself never puts on us more than we can bear, but he sometimes allows our fellow human-beings to put on us things which would be unbearable if He did not uphold



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

us. But, O suffering heart, because He allows such things He will always uphold us.

He who is sufficient for himself is the foolishness of the foolish or the wisest of the wise.

Imagination oftener causes misery than happiness.

Let us get what comfort we can from the thought that perhaps heaven will be inversely proportioned to all those sufferings of hell which have strayed to earth.

He is the strongest of all strong men who can honestly smile at the grave of buried hope.

The greatest sins committed, both intentionally and unintentionally, are done in the name of righteousness.

The end of our acts is the end of eternity.

In objective affairs the pleasure is in the pursuit and not in the attainment: in subjective affairs the pleasure is in the attainment, or the success.

To say that we know nothing is much more untrue than to affirm that we know all things: the first statement is a complete falsity, the other contains a little truth, as no sane man is wholly devoid of knowledge.

There is more hope of the man who has great vices than of him who has no great virtues.

The only time when failure means more failure than gain is when we do not rise above it.

Books bring priceless knowledge, but unless they develop us by throwing us more heavily back upon ourselves, we miss the greatest knowledge they can teach us.

Almost anything, even fanaticism, is much more forgivable than flippancy.

It should be a pleasure to admit, when we see it, that we have made a mistake or been at fault.— Not a pleasure in itself, of course, but because proof to ourself and evidence to others that our strife for purity is so sincere we will as freely condemn ourself, when occasion demands, as others.

Revenge is the bastard child of Justice and Hate.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Men are loved for nothing in particular,—without reason; they are disliked for one or two particular things, and with reason.

Reticence means lack of thoughts and stupidity oftener than depth or self-control.

The wise are oftener foolish than the foolish are wise.

The fisherman who cares not to lose or risk his flies, catches nothing.

More have repented speech than silence.

Knowledge is to some a burden on the back, to others a carriage.

The great see resemblances; the little see differences.

In one of the churches in Rome there is an elaborately painted ceiling which seems without beauty or harmony of design unless viewed from one particular point; so the perplexing mosaic of life cannot be interpreted aright save from the standpoint of faith,—faith in God and the hereafter.

Seeking pleasure for its own sake is like drinking brine to quench thirst.

From one thing a genius unfolds the world. Most men cannot discover one thing from an entire world.

Talent is voluntary concentration; genius is involuntary concentration.

Only small things deserve argument; great things are above it.

Stagnation is the result of not having known life: peace is the result of having lived, of having conquered.

Harmony with God is the aim of this world, the one end of all religions. Our discords arise from the finiteness of our means.

The genius reads others from a knowledge of himself; the ordinary man reads himself by comparison with others.

The chief business of life is to make distinctions.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

"I forgive;" in what way dost thou forgive when thou art still influenced by the past?

That friendship is very frail which thinks it necessary to always give presents in exchange for presents received.

### PASTELS.

#### DUTY.

All the men of the city, with one exception, are hastening out to win or die on the plain below the city. The one solitary man remaining bids them be brave, and says, "Ye must do your duty."

A woman who overhears him says, with a flash of her wavering, uncertain eyes, "You coward, why do you tell them to go but stay here yourself?"

He turns to her slowly and replies, very gently and as though he saw her not, "It is their place to kill and be killed, it is my place to live and create."

And the heavy tread of the departing men is confused and lost in the joyous song of a little bird in a cage just over their heads.

#### A SAINT.

She had involuntarily revealed to him her love, one hour when he was in great danger, and now he has had to write the decisive word. The letter lies before him, and with the face an angel of God might wear when on an errand of mercy he seals and directs it. He loves her, but duty calls, he fancies, and marriage is not for him.

Is he an angel of God?

She reads the letter, but she does not weep or moan. She is very calm, too calm, I think, for a human being in such agony.



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

Then she says: "He is one of God's saints: may He forgive him."

I pity her. Some of God's saints can be forgiven by only He Himself.

### IN THE SHADOW.

In the dark shadow of a church an old man is leaning against the ivy-covered wall and watching the worshipers as they leave. The light would dazzle him if he were in it, but he is in the shadow, in a very dark shadow, where these worshipers cannot see him and so where they cannot help him, of course.

These worshipers are still gazing heavenward, so that they even stumble sometimes as they walk from church.

(God's love, God's strengthening grace.—The wind blows, and it is very cold tonight.)

Many miles has this man walked today, how many perhaps no one will ever know. He walks back and forth a little, in the shadow, of course, where no one looks. He walks slowly, and his arms are folded, but he does not stand as erect as a man should when he folds his arms.

He watches the worshipers, and they are beautiful in his sight. He watches them, but not with envy nor anger, nor any other feeling that they would dislike to know; he simply watches them.

(The love of woman, the love of babes, the love of loving.—The snow falls thickly tonight; it will be deep by morning.)

The last of the worshipers has passed from the light of the church to the light of the street, and the sexton also has left.

The man stops walking and sits down. There is no place for him to sit but in the snow, and he sits in the snow.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

He drops his face in his hands and tries to recall some words his mother taught him, but it is cold, and he is very hungry.

He sits there a long time and is very quiet. He cannot think, but he can still move, and after several trials he kneels down in the snow. He feels strong now, and speaks out loud, with a firm voice.

I hear his words but I cannot write them. They are the words of a curse, a curse against God, and I shudder.

God Himself may hear a prayer.

After this the man is very still. I cannot see that he moves.

(Music and flowers, peace and strength, man's love and God's love.—In heaven dwell God and strength and light; on earth man and weakness and darkness.)

### THE TURNING OF THE LEAF.

The poet is saying to himself, "This is perfect."

He is seated on a log just at the edge of a forest that slopes up the hill back of him. He is gazing over the fair valley below. A faint wind, warm, and fragrant with the smell of burning leaves, floats slowly past and brings memories of his early youth.

No man is near him, no sign of the imperfections of man mars the affirmative and perfect joy of living that causes him to involuntarily clasp his hands and murmur, "This is perfect."

He is quite content; he feels no satiety, and no lack.

He is at peace with all the earth, and with the unknown things beyond the earth. He thinks that not even the summons of the angel of death could mar the tranquility of his feelings. Heaven? Heaven is not so very far away, surely, just the turn of the next leaf of this vast and symmetrical

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

cosmos. Almost he feels that it has been turned, so happy, so contented, is he.

While he has been thinking, with half-shut eyes, a woman has come up from the valley. She stands some ways from him, and looks at him. Suddenly he sees her, and starts at once to his feet.

The wind has turned the leaf over.

## THE MEASURE OF THE DRAUGHT OF LIFE.

In one of the strange visions I had while on that short but marvelous journey among the many realms of space, I saw, in one vast space separate and dreary, an Angel who seemed very busy. I drew near him, and as I did so the tears slowly gathered in my eyes, but why I could not say. I paused in front of him and watched in silence as he kept steadily at work. I wished to know what he was doing, but did not care to speak lest my voice should break, so strongly did he or his work affect me.

From a large mass of gray material on his right, and a much smaller mass, of the most dazzling colors, on his left, he was taking small portions and handing them, mixed, to attendants, who at once flew towards a small planet far, far off in the blue ether.

From time to time he seemed ready to sink beneath some vast burden, but at such times a Voice was heard, a Voice that made me tremble and caused the Angel to shudder and resume his work.

At last, very weary and very much troubled, I left him and followed one of those Angels who were flying towards the planet with the burdens of the dark and the light. Side by side we flew, and soon I was able to speak, but at that instant the Angel said to me, "I will tell you what you wish to ask. The Angel you saw measuring is undergoing his punishment

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

for his life on that planet we are going to, a life spent in utter selfishness. His punishment is to mete out the joyous and the painful to the men of the earth, and, as you saw, the bitter things of that life far outweigh the sweet things. Nay, ask me not why the men of that earth must be so unhappy; there is but One in all the universe who can answer you that.

"Frequently the most worthy of that people receive the largest burdens of the gray, and but little of the beautiful. Their days are passed in hope and misery mixed, and no man can sit down with joy and know that he shall rise with peace. When we carry to some mortal more of the beautiful than the dark, we know that he may be the chiefest sinner among them, and are sadder than when carrying burdens to the pure and the meek.

"My own punishment, also, is this of continually being the messenger of trouble and death always, and sometimes pleasure, though there is a worse fate than mine: there are some—but these are very strong and very wicked—who carry the gift of life."

And as the Angel swept onward alone, I said to my tears as they fell, "Life, and sorrow, and death: yea, fall fast, O tears, fall fast, if ye would keep pace with the way of the world."

### IN THE NIGHT.

#### Buddhistic.

Richly carved is the bedstead, heavy and finely wrought the hangings surrounding it, while the other things seem well adapted to make any one happy who is so favored of the gods as to be laid thereon. Yet this woman, who can be dimly seen through the canopy, must be a strange creature. She is asleep, and one should be at peace, we think, when asleep, if at no other time. But see the muscles of her face, do they not twitch with pain, or at least unrest? And does not

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

her entire body seem to slowly move from side to side on that luxurious bed? Truly she is in pain, because now the tears are coming, slowly forced out from under the eyelids. Steadily they flow, at first dropping one by one from the cheek, at last running down the cheek to the pure, white neck.

Can she not weep enough in the daytime, without marring the holy calm of the night? But hush!—maybe it is never daytime with her; there have been such, from the time when God and Satan both said, "It is very good."

Silently, steadily, still they flow. But ah, relief is surely near; an Angel has been sent on an errand of mercy, and leans tenderly over the poor human. He will whisper to her words of comfort and strength, words, I think, of mysterious origin, since that wretched earth could never supply them, probably they are from Heaven.

God have mercy, what a shriek that was! From her, HER, did it come, that long horrible wail? May the great Love surround her! Was she deaf, then, or did the Angel's words but wring her heart the more?

The Angel has gone; perhaps he can be of service in Heaven, since there is no place for him on earth.

Let us go. She could neither see the Angel, nor hear him, and we cannot help her. She must sleep on as best she can, alone, and blind, and deaf, cursed with the life of that planet.

Let us return to our own sphere, and be glad that what those beings call joy and pain can never invade our Nirvana.

### THE OUTCAST.

Poor, pitiable creature! In rags, with bowed head and shame-faced walk, she stops me on the street and says, "Come with me."

Passersby, for though it is nearly midnight the city is still alive, eye us curiously and smile. I cannot yield to her



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

request, but I want to help her, to think of some plan by which she can earn an honest living. Ignorant, doubtless, and unskilled, what can she do? I look closely for signs of potential power and beauty of soul, but she is far from her childhood's grace, and her will has been weakened. I must pass on.

As I move away, she stands still, and looks at me. Her eyes do not blaze, she is not angry, but there is something in them that detains me.

She is my sister, if I am a man, she is a child born in His likeness, and can I leave her alone in her sin, ignorant and blind? If I have wisdom and light will they remain if unused? Am I better than she if I pass by on the other side? I, born in purity and bred like a human being, have still cursed God in the insanity of grief; I, strong, and having had converse with God, have still known the time when daily for years I have prayed for death, and all but laid down the burden of life. She, a woman, weak and alone, what know I of her birth and life? Dare I condemn her? Am I God?

She lays a hand on my arm and whispers, "Help me: I am starving."

I take her hand in mine and say, "My unknown sister, come with me. My need would be as great as yours if I did not help you. Come."

She looks doubtful at first, but finally gives me her arm and walks by my side.

There is a woman I know who can give her bread, and bread. To her we will go, and perhaps in the years to come this poor animal will learn a human being's capacity for communion with God, her Father and Mother.

### LOST.

The room is darkened, and the hush of a Mighty Spirit, the Spirit of the Future, envelopes the room, seeming to rise from the silent form on the bed, the form of a woman.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

In one corner and facing the bed sits a man, motionless, save for a barely perceptible swaying movement of the body, a man with dreamy eyes and a voluptuous chin. He seems in thought, and stares with large, steady eyes at the Spirit of the Future, which takes the shape, in his mind, of a black moon floating in space.

The door opens, and some one, a man, enters. He enters slowly, as though in doubt, but as he sees the man in the chair looking steadily at Something and making no motion, he advances rapidly and touches him on the shoulder. His act does not seem to be noticed.

The guardian of the law waits and speaks one word; he says, "Come." There is no reply, and again he touches the man, placing himself, as he does so, between him and the bed on which lies the form of the woman. The man in the chair slowly looks up, and acts as if he had lost something. He feels himself grasped roughly by the hand, and led toward the door. At the door his hands are placed against each other, in front of him, and bound together. He does not resist, he does not speak; perhaps he does not think. He is led away.

And why is he led away?

Out of love for a woman two men met under the oaks at the rising of the sun, and the door of the soul of one of them had in a flash been opened, and the other had smiled for joy. But his joy changed when he told the woman, for she looked at him, and then fell to the ground.

Now they are together, and he is alone.

### "IF YOU LOVE ME, LEAN HARD."

They two had been walking in a valley all the day, one sometimes in front of the other, again side by side; they had laughed much, and had paid little attention to the uses of the various articles they noticed, but spoke of their great

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

variety and curious appearance. The path had been level, winding in and out among fields and woods and along gently-flowing streams, and their most serious occupation had been twining strings of flowers to swing between them. When they pulled too hard and broke the string they wept and tried to blame each other, but they always made another string and said, "This one will last longer."

As night closed in the path slowly wound upward among the hills. The streams of water grew shallower, and the oaks, with their lines of beauty, were exchanged for an occasional stiff and thin-branching pine. The flowers also were not so easily made into chains and soon they reluctantly cast aside their last connecting flower-link, which they had held till it almost dropped to pieces in their hands.

Rapidly the path ascended. Below, the valley could easily be seen in all its wealth of woods and brooks and even flowers, and it seemed at each step that the remembrance of their first careless hours grew more sweet. Above, a cold, tenebrous fog obscured all, and they alternately laughed and shivered in the darkness.

They pressed onward. Indeed, they could not stop, much less turn backward and live again in the sunny valley. They drew near each other and the hand of each sought the hand of the other. The path grew steeper, and very rough, and very dangerous. Not so many words were spoken now, for strength was much needed, but the words they spoke were thoughtful and sincere. Each had to look well where he stepped, but they would sometimes stumble and cry out in pain, and the pain, once felt, stayed ever.

Then each grasped the other's hand closer and said, "Will you not lean on me a little?" But although each said it earnestly neither one would burden the other with his thoughts, and for a time they endured silently.

When the moon came up they were almost sorry, for although they could see each other more clearly the emicant



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

rays served mainly to reveal the pain they could but show in their faces. At last, by degrees, they talked over their trials, and as love saw that in dismissing sympathy from self and trying to save the beloved sorrow, they lost sympathy and gained but little, and because love will not be satisfied to burden others yet share no burdens, each cried as with one mind, "Lean more heavily on me."

And they were surprised to find that as each one shared the other's troubles his own troubles grew less weighty. As this dawned on them they tried to reason it out but could not do so. When they fully realized this most wonderful paradox of love, the cry of each came from the heart, "If you love me, lean hard."

And then and not till then they regained all the beauty of the happy valley-hours, with added sweetness and depth.

### SERAPHAEL AND SERAPHITA.

Drawn together by the principle of mutual affinity, Seraphael and Seraphita thought but of each other and withdrew themselves from among the other angels in Heaven.

With greater lavishness than this world can conceive had God endowed them with spiritual graces, and in silent and perfect adoration each had acknowledged his debt and his happiness until they met each other. Even then, by their almost infinite strength and wisdom they had refrained from all selfishness, and without consciousness of refraining, for what would be, if measured by the measure bound in the mind of man, thousands upon thousands of cycles, and for many more cycles, innumerable cycles, they had fought selfishness.

There came a time when they conquered the shadow of evil which hung over them, and then rang intensely through all Heaven's souls the reverberations of renewed love for the great Source of Love.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

At this time Seraphael and Seraphita might have been relieved from all danger of again committing the same error. but they did not choose to accept such freedom. They were stronger now, they were wiser now, they were purer than they had been.

But once more the self in each sought the other too strongly, once more the joy they derived from each other blinded them to the presence of the Supreme Source of Joy. They forgot that the light they so adored in each other was bestowed on them by the Essence of Light, when He called them forth from the Infinite and gave them names, and lo! they were!

Surrounded by the Light Himself, they were yet in darkness unless near each other.

Then God spake.

When they heard His voice they were afraid. They turned themselves to listen.

God spake, and they heard His words.

"Because you have forgotten God while in Heaven, you shall struggle to remember Him while in a new place,—struggle endlessly, and well-nigh in vain.

"Because the Light of the Absolute was no light to you, you shall seek the Light with many tears, troubled and doubting, and never agreeing between yourselves as to what is light and what is darkness.

"Because you refused the perfection I gave you, you shall be tormented by the imperfections I now give you.

"For wrapped in swaddling-bands you shall be, the dark bands of bodies of earth, narrow, and vile, and in every way unfit. Through these you shall re-learn the laws of Heaven, through these you shall procreate your kind, and the sufferings borne by your children shall be borne again by you before you can regain Heaven.

"You have desired each other more than you have desired me: take each other as fully as you can, and bless or curse yourselves as you will.



## *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

"Go! I create a sphere for you, the Earth. If you seek me early, you shall find me. I will not leave you wholly, because I cannot be unjust, but if you seek me, seek me through each other. Only thus, by unselfishness, shall your crime of loving the part and not the Whole, be blotted out."

In this manner sinned the two Angels, Seraphael and Seraphita, whom we call Adam and Eve.

### THE DANCE.

The musician is playing on his violin, and all who are within reach of the music are dancing.

Out of their extreme joy they stumble against the musician, and knock him down, and the music stops. While he is regaining his feet they jeer at him, and some curse him for his weakness. He does not reply. Again he plays and again they dance.

He plays more ravishly than before, because he is wounded, and because he cannot help doing his best.

He does not dance himself, and when some one calls attention to it they all demand of him the reason. He gives them no reply, and they whisper among themselves.

Although his eyes are shut he knows that they and he are drifting apart. But he holds his violin closer to him and plays with a wondrously calm strength: the tears fall, it is true, but only the strong can weep.

His tears are not wiped away: he is too busy, and the others are dancing.

Suddenly, in the very height of a passionate outburst of melody, such as makes even the dancers themselves almost too happy to move, there falls silence. One of the dancers shouts roughly to the musician, and, as a most excellent jest, pinches the eyelids of the prostrate man and raises them. Horror-stricken he turns to his fellows and tries to speak, but no words issue from his lips.

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

The crowd gather around, and are silent. Some of them are soon ashamed to be so quiet, and turn away to dance as well as they can. The others, as with one consent, gently raise the body and bear it to a quiet place.

They move slowly and reverently, because he is dead, and they are for a few moments even a little less rough than usual with one another.

Then they buy a stone, not a very costly one, but at least of more value than aught owned by the musician before, and they carve on it holy words, words of life, such as never came to his ears while alive.

Then they sit down and weep, because they would dance and there is no music.

### THE HOUSE OF ANNIHILATION.

White shapes hover pityingly around this man and moan with ruth for him. He lies face downward on a vermeil cloud kindly stretched between him and the waters by the ministering shapes, a cloud woven of peace and strength.

The black rays of light from above are let from descending on him, and the yawning, turgid whirlpool of death beneath, which cries horribly for him also is thwarted: angels gather in their bosoms the rays and mantle him in a vacuum against the cries. Yet maugre all their care the soul shivers and shrinks. A vision, too large and too black for them to relieve, a tangible vision within himself, is the cause. Alone he thinks himself, but if he were—if he were that vision would draw around him with the irresistible sweep of death. The vision affects the heavenly angels, though they do not see it. They are fresh from God, but the seer is mortal.

It is a vision of life without love.

Motionless, the soul is swallowed up by the darkness of life, enveloped, powerless, bound by a veil wrought on the

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

loom of outer blackness. No words destroy his sight of the vision, no thoughts sail between him and that open grave: silence speaks despair.

The angels grow weak from long vigils and call to God, near eternity's term, for strength or wisdom. Their leader listens, then breathes, "It is enough." He directs their flight and they slowly bear the heavy burden of that soul to a house builded by God between heaven and hell, a house founded on love and composed of infinite mercy. They bear him thither gently, and then sing duans of joy to God for having provided the House of Annihilation.

### THROUGH MEN.

A woman is in much pain of spirit. Affliction the hardest has visited her, and her heart is cold and hard. She is too indifferent to man to hate him, but against God her hate revels in curses; He has laughed at her. He has tempted her, He has robbed her of joy, even the joy of hope.

After a time she slowly and steadily takes a bottle in her hand. Nothing in the Beyond can be worse, and her death will be an excellent revenge, an excellent joke, against Him who wants her to live.

A man who does not know her — does not even know her name, but who saw her face yesterday, is praying for her. His sympathy is so deep it reaches the fountain of tears and they fall — not to the ground but — into my brother's hand, my angel-brother, who changes them by our Heavenly alchemy into thoughts of wisdom and love and peace, in which form the angel carries them to the woman. She listens, and is recalled. She puts down the bottle, and with a great sob falls to her knees.

This is no place for me or any other angel; I withdraw. The work God gave me to do has been done and done by a human in a better way.



# *A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE*

## THE PASSING OF A MAN'S SOUL.

A man sat by a darkened window, intent on his work, which must be done or the body would perish.

"Father," came a child's voice from an inner room, "father will you not take me out to see the procession now?"

The man, who sat by the window but never looked out, kept his eyes down on his work and replied, "Time enough, child, time enough."

Outside, moment after moment and hour after hour the eternal procession of glorious but idle angels sped on. The man could not see them. He heard a confused murmur of voices, and felt irritated at them and at his work, but did not feel the need of an interpreter.

"Father," came the delicate voice again, "father, it is very dark here, and I hear voices calling me, calling me; will you not open the door?"

"Time enough, child, time enough," and the man's work went on.

There was silence for a long time. After a while a faint sigh was heard. The man bent his head to listen and opened his lips to say, "Time enough, child," but this time no words came to his ears. He went on with his work.

He thought he was relieved, (his work went steadily on,) and after awhile forgot that he had ever heard a sound from the inner room.

The eternal procession of glorious but idle angels sped on and in Heaven the watchers whispered one to another, "It was but six months old, when it should have been nine; will it live?"

# A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

## THE UNBUILT TEMPLE.

An angel appears to a young man in his sleep:—

"If thou treadest watchfully the path of thy life, young man, in the days to come it shall be thy privilege to build a mighty temple, and this temple shall be called great and wonderful by all thy fellows, so exceeding mighty shall it be. See thou value rightly the great things and the small things of earth, and build thy temple so grandly that even thine enemies shall have to say, 'He is great!'"

The angel vanishes and the man awakes and muses.

"This thing is from above! I will dwell carefully upon it, and read well the words of the wise one. Let me be very strong and very patient. Shall I, born to do some great deed or utter some divine law, presume to run the risk of missing my duty because occupied with trifles? I will not waste myself on trifles and dissipate my strength before this great thing faces me, but I will sit down and wait for it, and when it comes it shall find me fully prepared. This is surely the wisest way, to be always ready for the performance of my great duty."

The years pass slowly, and the young man sits and watches very keenly for a sign. But the years pass and the sign comes not. The years pass and bring the hour of death, when the angel appears again.

"Accursed art thou, in that thou hast not performed that wonderful deed I foretold thee it should be thy privilege to do."

With sorrow and with anger the old man raises his head.

"Is it my sin that I could not do what was not to be done? I watched and waited and prayed, and crushed life's pleasures, and sat very still, but there was no great deed for me to do, no wise word for me to speak. Is it my sin?"



## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

The face of the angel grows dark, and his voice becomes like unto the undertone of the sea.

"Yea, it is thy sin.

"The great deed thou didst miss would have been made up of the little things that thou didst choose to pass by.

"What more shall I say?

"Thou hast sinned, yea, thou hast sinned, because thou didst not see the greatness of trifles, nor remember that what thou didst call 'little things' might be built by thee into a noble temple."

The old man bows his head and is silent, because the years come and the years pass and not for small things nor for great things may the years turn backward.

### THE WORSHIPERS.

Now it came to pass in the still night watches, when my body was asleep, that my soul dreamed a dream.

And in my dream I heard a voice say, "Unstop his ears that he may hear."

And I became aware of the presence of an Angel, and he touched mine ears, saying, "When thou hearest a sound, a great sound, as of many mighty waters rushing headlong, listen and fear nothing."

Then verily did burst on my hearing a mighty noise, a most discordant frush, and I stretched out my hand to the Angel, who said, "Fear not! Now tell me what thou hearest."

After pondering a long time I turned me to the Angel and said, "This discordant sound is that of many and diverse petitions, of which some are directed to the Eternal but more to the Spirit of Evil. I further perceive that well nigh each and every voice thinks its own tone the right and the only right tone, and some few voices there be which desire all the others destroyed. Yet I hear faintly a few that are as pure and

## A VOICE FROM THE SILENCE

sweet as the voices of the morning stars when they sing together."

And the Angel said, "These are all the voices of the religions, the sects, the churches, and the individual hearts, upon your planet. They are many in number. They are wondrously many in number. Yet, the understanding of your little heart is darkened: none of these petitions are directed to the Spirit of Evil, though only God and we know the heart of man, and the love of only God is great enough to forgive your many strange desires. Those few and sweet voices — ah! those few sweet voices redeem — redeem the world!"

As I listened again to the strange murmur I wept, and cried saying, "Would that these voices were as one!"

And the Angel answered and said, "They will be when in that state you call 'Heaven.'"

Then did my soul face eagerly the face of the Angel and say to him, "They will verily attain Heaven, then — all these many jangling voices?"

Bending on me a wondering look he answered, "They will. All who strive for Right and Light shall be happy. Worship they not all as truly and deeply as they know? Strive they not all to love — to be unselfish, though some half-heartedly? From the north and the south, from the east and the west shall they be gathered, and there shall carilloux harmonies ascend to the Eternal, as from one sweet and glorified tongue."

And as I listened again I sighed and said, "God is very patient."

"God is very patient. He is Love, and His ways are past finding out," murmured the Angel.

Again he touched mine ears saying, "Have you learned? Go, return to earth, and live in the spirit of Love. Love, and judge not. Love, and be very charitable, for you yourself jar on Heaven's peace."

And I awoke, and beheld the impartial sun.

### L'Envoi.

Good night! I close the book, my task at end,  
The little all that friendship's faith may do:  
Thy Voice has spoken from the Silence, friend . . .  
And now I pausing, wonder . . . "if he knew!"  
It matters not. Rest till the Morning Light  
Shall summon . . . softly . . . so . . . Good Night!  
Good Night!

—Ina CoolBrith.





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